

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER 1917.

AIRMEN O' WAR.

IV. DOWN IN HUNLAND.

BY BOYD CABLE.

It was cold—bitterly, biting, fiercely cold. It was also at intervals wet, and misty, and snowy, as the 'plane ran by turns through various clouds; but it was the cold that was uppermost in the minds of pilot and observer as they flew through the darkness. They were on a machine of the night-bombing squadron, and the 'Night-Fliers' in winter weather take it more or less as part of the night's work that they are going to be out in cold and otherwise unpleasant weather conditions; but the cold this night was, as the pilot put it in his thoughts, 'over the odds.'

It was the Night-Fliers' second trip over Hunland. The first trip had been a short one to a near objective, because at the beginning of the night the weather looked too doubtful to risk a long trip. But before they had come back the weather had cleared, and the Squadron Commander, after full deliberation, had decided to chance the long trip and bomb a certain place which he knew it was urgent should be damaged as much and as soon as possible.

All this meant that the Fliers had the shortest possible space of time on the ground between the two trips. Their machines were loaded up with fresh supplies of bombs just as quickly as it could be done, the petrol and oil tanks refilled, expended rounds of ammunition for the machine-guns replaced. Then, one after another, the machines steered out into the darkness across the 'drome ground towards a twinkle of light placed to guide them, wheeled round, gave the engine a preliminary whirl, steadied it down, opened her out again, and one by one at intervals lumbered off at gathering speed, and soared off up into the darkness.

The weather held until the objective was reached, although glances astern showed ominous clouds banking up and darkening

the sky behind them. The bombs were loosed and seen to strike in leaping gusts of flame on the ground below, while searchlights stabbed up into the sky and groped round to find the raiders, and the Hun 'Archies' spat sharp tongues of flame up at them. Several times the shells burst near enough to be heard above the roar of the engine; but one after another the Night-Fliers 'dropped the eggs' and wheeled and drove off for home, the observers leaning over and picking up any visible speck of light or the flickering spurts of a machine-gun's fire and loosing off quick bursts of fire at these targets. But every pilot knew too well the meaning of those banking clouds to the west, and was in too great haste to get back, to spend time hunting targets for their machine-guns, and each opened his engine out and drove hard to reach the safety of our own lines before thick weather could catch and bewilder them.

The 'Osca' was the last machine to arrive at the objective and deliver her bombs and swing for home, and because she was the last she came in for the fully awakened defence's warmest welcome, and wheeled with searchlights hunting for her, with Archie shells coughing round, with machine-guns spitting fire and their bullets *zizz-izz-ipping* up past her, with 'flaming onions' curving up in streaks of angry red fire and falling blazing to earth again. A few of the bullets ripped and rapped viciously through the fabric of her wings, but she suffered no further damage, although the fire was hot enough and close enough to make her pilot and observer breathe sighs of relief as they droned out into the darkness and left all the devilment of fire and lights astern.

The word of the Night-Fliers' raid had evidently gone abroad through the Hun lines however, and as they flew west they could see searchlight after light switching and scything through the dark in search of them. Redmond, or 'Reddie,' the pilot, was a good deal more concerned over the darkening sky, and the cold that by now was piercing to his bones, than he was over the searchlights or the chance of running into further Archie fire. He lifted the 'Osca' another 500 feet as he flew, and drove on with his eyes on the compass and on the cloud banks ahead in turn. Flying conditions do not lend themselves to conversation between pilot and observer, but once or twice the two exchanged remarks, very brief and boiled-down remarks, on their position and the chances of reaching the lines before they ran into 'the thick.' That a thick was coming was painfully clear to both. The sky by now

was completely darkened, and the earth below was totally and utterly lost to sight. The pilot had his compass, and his compass only, left to guide him, and he kept a very close and attentive eye on that and his instrument denoting height. Their bombing objective had been a long way behind the German lines, but Reddie and 'Walk' Jones, the observer, were already beginning to congratulate themselves on their nearness to the lines and the probability of escaping the storm, when the storm suddenly whirled down upon them. It came without warning, although warning would have been of little use, since they could do nothing but continue to push for home. One minute they were flying, in darkness it is true, but still in a clear air; the next they were simply barging blindly through a storm of rain which probably poured straight down to earth but which to them, flying at some scores of miles per hour, was driving level and with the force of whip cuts full in their faces. Both pilot and observer were blinded. The water cataracting on their goggles cut off all possibility of sight, and Reddie could not even see the compass in front of him or the gleam of light that illuminated it. He held the machine as steady and straight on her course as instinct and a sense of direction would allow him, and after some minutes they passed clear of the rain-storm. Everything was streaming wet—their faces, their goggles, their clothes, and everything they touched in the machine. Reddie mopped the wet off his compass and peered at it a moment, and then with an angry exclamation pushed rudder and joy-stick over and swung round to a direction fairly opposite to the one they had been travelling. Apparently he had turned completely round in the minutes through the rain—once round at least, and Heaven only knew how many more times. They flew for a few minutes in comparatively clear weather, and then, quite suddenly, they whirled into a thick mist cloud. At first both Reddie and 'Walk' thought it was snow, so cold was the touch of the wet on their faces; but even when they found it was no more than a wet mist cloud they were little better off, because again both were completely blinded so far as seeing how or where they were flying went. Reddie developed a sudden fear that he was holding the 'Osca's' nose down, and in a quick revulsion pulled the joy-stick back until he could feel her rear and swoop upwards. He was left with a sense of feeling only to guide him. He could see no faintest feature of the instrument-board in front of him, had to depend entirely on his sense of touch and feel and instinct to know whether the 'Osca'

was on a level keel, flying forward, or up or down, or lying right over on either wing tip.

The mist cleared, or they flew clear of it, as suddenly as they had entered it, and Reddie found again that he had lost direction, was flying north instead of west. He brought the 'Osca' round again and let her drop until the altimeter showed a bare two hundred feet above the ground and peered carefully down for any indication of his whereabouts. He could see nothing—blank nothing, below, or above, or around him. He lifted again to the thousand-foot mark and drove on towards the west. He figured that they ought to be coming somewhere near the lines now, but better be safe than sorry, and he'd get well clear of Hunland before he chanced coming down.

Then the snow shut down on them. If they had been blinded before, they were doubly blind now. It was not only that the whirling flakes of snow shut out any sight in front of or around them; it drove clinging against their faces, their glasses, their bodies, and froze and was packed hard by the wind of their own speed as they flew. And it was cold, bone- and marrow-piercing cold. Reddie lost all sense of direction again, all sense of whether he was flying forward, or up or down, right side or wrong side up. He even lost any sense of time; and when the scud cleared enough for him to make out the outline of his instruments he could not see the face of his clock, his height or speed recorders, or anything else, until he had scraped the packed snow off them. But this time, according to the compass, he was flying west and in the right direction. So much he just had time to see when they plunged again into another whirling smother of fine snow. They flew through that for minutes which might have been seconds or hours for all the pilot knew. He could see nothing through his clogged goggles, that blurred up faster than he could wipe them clear; he could hear nothing except, dully, the roar of his engine; he could feel nothing except the grip of the joy-stick, numbly, through his thick gloves. He kept the 'Osca' flying level by sheer sense of feel, and at times had all he could do to fight back a wave of panic which rushed on him with a belief that the machine was side-slipping or falling into a spin that would bring him crashing to earth. When the snow cleared again and he was able to see his lighted instruments he made haste to brush them clear of snow and peer anxiously at them. He found he was a good thousand feet up and started at once to lift a bit higher for safety's sake. By the compass he was

still flying homeward, and by the time—the time—he stared hard at his clock . . . and found it was stopped. But the petrol in his main tank was almost run out, and according to that he ought to be well over the British lines—if he had kept anything like a straight course. He held a brief and shouted conversation with his observer. 'Don't know where I am. Lost. Think we're over our lines.'

'Shoot a light, eh?' answered the observer, 'and try 'n' land. I'm frozen stiff.'

They both peered anxiously round as their Verey light shot out and floated down; but they could see no sign of a flare or an answering light. They fired another signal, and still had no reply; and then, 'I'm going down,' yelled the pilot, shutting off his engine and letting the machine glide down in a slow sweeping circle. He could see nothing of the ground when the altimeter showed 500 feet, nor at 300 nor at 200, so opened the throttle and picked up speed again. 'Shove her down,' yelled the observer. 'More snow coming.'

Another Verey light, shot straight down overboard, showed a glimpse of a grass field, and Reddie swung gently round, and slid downward again. At the same time he fired a landing light fixed out under his lower wing-tip in readiness for just such an occasion as this, and by its glowing vivid white light made a fairly good landing on rough grass land. He shut the engine off at once, because he had no idea how near he was to the edge of the field or what obstacles they might bump if they taxied far, and the machine came quickly to rest. The two men sat still for a minute breathing a sigh of thankfulness that they were safe to ground, then turned and looked at each other in the dying light of the flare. Stiffly they stood up, climbed clumsily out of their places, and down on to the wet ground. Another flurry of snow was falling, but now that they were at rest the snow was floating and drifting gently down instead of beating in their faces with hurricane force as it did when they were flying.

Reddie flapped his arms across his chest and stamped his numbed feet. Walk Jones pulled his gloves off and breathed on his stiff fingers. 'I'm fair froze,' he mumbled. 'Wonder where we are, and how far from the 'drome?'

'Lord knows,' returned Reddie. 'I don't know even where the line is—ahead or astern, right hand or left.'

'Snow's clearing again,' said Jones. 'Perhaps we'll get a

bearing then, and I'll go 'n' hunt for a camp or a cottage, or anyone that'll give us a hot drink.'

'Wait a bit,' said Reddie. 'Stand where you are and let's give a yell. Some sentry or someone's bound to hear us. Snow's stopping all right; but, Great Scott! isn't it dark!'

Presently they lifted their voices and yelled an 'A-hoy' together at the pitch of their lungs. There was no answer, and after a pause they yelled again, still without audible result.

'Oh, curse!' said Jones shivering. 'I'm not going to hang about here yelping like a lost dog. And we might hunt an hour for a cottage. I'm going to get aboard again and loose off a few rounds from my machine-gun into the ground. That will stir somebody up and bring 'em along.'

'There's the line,' said Reddie suddenly. 'Look!' and he pointed to where a faint glow rose and fell, lit and faded, along the horizon. 'And the guns,' he added, as they saw a sheet of light jump somewhere in the distance and heard the *bump* of the report. Other gun flashes flickered and beat across the dark sky. 'Funny,' said Reddie; 'I'd have sworn I turned round as we came down, and I thought the lines were dead the other way.'

The observer was fumbling about to get his foot in the step. 'I thought they were way out to the right,' he said. 'But I don't care a curse where they are. I want a camp or a French cottage with coffee on the stove. I'll see if I can't shoot somebody awake.'

'Try one more shout first,' said Reddie, and they shouted together again.

'Got 'im,' said Reddie joyfully, as a faint hail came in response, and Jones took his foot off the step and began to fumble under his coat for a torch. 'Here!' yelled Reddie. 'This way! Here!'

They heard the answering shouts draw nearer, and then, just as Jones found his torch and was pulling it out from under his coat, Reddie clutched at his arm. 'What—what was it——' he gasped. 'Did you hear what they called?'

'No, couldn't understand,' said Jones in some surprise at the other's agitation. 'They're French, I suppose; farm people, most like.'

'It was *German*,' said Reddie hurriedly. 'There again, hear that? *We've dropped in Hunland.*'

'Hu-Hunland!' stammered Jones; then desperately, 'It can't be. You sure it isn't French—Flemish, perhaps?'

'Flemish—here!' said Reddie, dismissing the idea, as Jones

admitted he might well do, so far south in the line. 'I know little enough German, but I know French well enough; and that's not French. We're done in, Walk.'

'Couldn't we bolt for it?' said Walk, looking hurriedly round. 'It's dark, and we know where the lines are.'

'What hope of getting through them?' said Reddie, speaking in quick whispers. 'But we've got a better way. We'll make a try. Here, quickly, and quiet as you can—get to the prop. and swing it when I'm ready. We'll chance a dash for it.'

Both knew the chances against them, knew that in front of the machine might lie a ditch, a tree, a hedge, a score of things that would trip them as they taxied to get speed to rise; they knew too that the Germans were coming closer every moment, that they might be on them before they could get the engine started, that they would probably begin shooting at the first sound of her start. All these things and a dozen others raced through their minds in an instant; but neither hesitated, both moved promptly and swiftly. Reddie clambered up and into his seat; Walk Jones jumped to the propeller, and began to wind it backwards to 'suck in' the petrol to the cylinders. 'When she starts, jump to the wing-tip and try 'n' swing her round,' called Reddie in quick low tones. 'It'll cheek her way. Then you must jump for it, and hang on and climb in as we go. Yell when you're aboard. All ready now.'

A shout came out of the darkness—a shout and an obvious question in German. 'Contact,' said Walk Jones, and swung the propeller his hardest. He heard the whirr of the starter as Reddie twirled it rapidly. 'Off,' called Jones as he saw the engine was not giving sign of life, and 'Off' answered Reddie, cutting off the starting current.

Another shout came, and with it this time what sounded like an imperative command. Reddie cursed his lack of knowledge of German. He could have held them in play a minute if— 'Contact,' came Walk's voice again. 'Contact,' he answered, and whirled the starter madly again. There was still no movement, no spark of life from the engine. Reddie groaned, and Walk Jones, sweating despite the cold over his exertions on the propeller, wound it back again and swung it forward with all his weight. His thick leather coat hampered him. He tore it off and flung it to the ground, and tried again. The shouts were louder now and coming from different points, as if a party had split up and was searching the field. A couple of electric torches threw dancing patches of light on the

ground, lifted occasionally and flashed round. One was coming straight towards them, and Reddie with set teeth waited the shout of discovery he knew must come presently, and cursed Walk's slowness at the 'prop.' Again on the word he whirled the starter, and this time 'Whur-r-r-rum,' answered the engine, suddenly leaping to life; 'Whur-r-r-ROO-OO-OO-OOM-ur-r-r-umph,' as Reddie eased and opened the throttle. He heard a babel of shouts and yells, and saw the light-patches come dancing on the run towards them. A sudden recollection of the only two German words he knew came to him. 'Ja wohl,' he yelled at the pitch of his voice, 'Ja wohl'; then in lower hurried tones, 'Swing her, Walk; quick, swing her,' and opened the engine out again. The running lights stopped for a minute at his yell, and Walk Jones jumped to the wing-tip, shouted 'Right!' and hung on while Reddie started to taxi the machine forward. His weight and leverage brought her lumbering round, the roar of engine and propeller rising and sinking as Reddie manipulated the throttle, and Reddie yelling his 'Ja wohl,' every time the noise died down. 'Get in, Walk; get aboard,' he shouted, when the nose was round and pointing back over the short stretch they had taxied on landing, and which he therefore knew was clear running for at least a start. He heard another order screamed in German, and next instant the *bang* of a rifle, not more apparently than a score of yards away. He kept the machine lumbering forward, restraining himself from opening his engine out, waiting in an agony of apprehension for Walk's shout. He felt the machine lurch and sway, and the kicking scramble his observer made to board her, heard next instant his yelling 'Right-oh!' and opened the throttle full as another couple of rifles bang-banged. The rifles had little terror either for him or the observer, because both knew there were bigger and deadlier risks to run in the next few seconds. There were still desperately long odds against their attempt succeeding. In the routine method of starting a machine, chocks are placed in front of the wheels and the engine is given a short full-power run and a longer easier one to warm the engine and be sure all is well; then the chocks are pulled away and she rolls off, gathering speed as she goes, until she has enough for her pilot to lift her into the air. Here, their engine was stone cold, they knew nothing of what lay in front of them, might crash into something before they left the ground, might rise, and even then catch some house or treetop, and travelling at the speed they would by then have attained—well, the Lord help them!

Reddie had to chance everything, and yet throw away no shadow of a chance. He opened the throttle wide, felt the machine gather speed, bumping and jolting horribly over the rough field, tried to peer down at the ground to see how fast they moved, could see nothing, utterly black nothing, almost panicked for one heart-stilling instant as he looked ahead again and thought he saw the blacker shadow of something solid in front of him, clenched his teeth and held straight on until he felt by the rush of wind on his face he had way enough, and pulled the joy-stick in to him. With a sigh of relief he felt the jolting change to a smooth swift rush, held his breath, and with a pull on the stick zoomed her up, levelled her out again (should clear anything but a tall tree now), zoomed her up again. He felt a hand thumping on his shoulder, heard Walk's wild exultant yell—'Ra-a-ay!' and, still lifting her steadily, swung his machine's nose for the jumping lights that marked the trenches.

They landed safe on their own 'drome ground half an hour after. The officer whose duty it was for the night to look after the landing-ground and light the flares in answer to the returning pilots' signals, walked over to them as they came to rest.

'Hullo, you two,' he said. 'Where th' blazes you been till this time? We'd just about put you down as missing.'

Reddie and Walk had stood up in their cockpits and, without a spoken word, were solemnly shaking hands.

Reddie looked overboard at the officer on the ground. 'You may believe it, Johnny, or you may not,' he said, 'but we've been down into Hunland.'

'Down into hell!' said Johnny. 'Quit jokin'. What kept you so late?'

'You've said it, Johnny,' said Reddie soberly. 'Down into hell—and out again.'

They shook hands again, solemnly.

LIFE'S FAVOURITE.

LIFE she loved him—she seemed the slave,
 Slave of his lightest and least desire ;
 And so to his glorious youth she gave
 Glory that youths admire.

Gifts she gave him of strength and skill,
 Gave him lordship of teams and crews,
 With the Love of the Game and, better still,
 Of playing it, win or lose.

An Eton spell and an Oxford spell,
 Pride of tradition and lore of shop,
 Worship of friends who spake him well,
 With the run of the *Club* and *Pop*.

All good pleasures would come his way,
 All good men give him nod for nod ;
 His laugh and his greeting haunt to-day
 Staircase E in the Quad.

Then why did her favours end so soon ?
 Did she forsake, betray, forget,
 When she sent him with his platoon
 Over the parapet ?

Was it because he showed her praise
 In his glowing self, that the fear would strike
 Of faded charms in the pleasureless days,
 And torture her, lover-like ?

Or was she moved by a greater thought,
 And dealt with him still as friend with friend,
 In bringing the wonderful work she had wrought
 To its only possible end ?

ALFRED COCHRANE.

*TWO LETTERS TO A PAINTER FROM
W. M. THACKERAY.*

BY LADY RITCHIE.

THE two letters here given, written to Mr. Frank Stone, and lately sent to the Editor of the CORNHILL MAGAZINE by Mr. Arthur Stone, were first posted from Paris to London at a time when my father had gone there to study art, and when he had first taken to writing as a means for earning his livelihood. My own recollections do not begin till some time after.

Looking back at the vast ocean of days succeeding days to which some of us can still turn in wonder, I cannot quite tell where the various events should be reckoned with, and when it was that my sister came home after a drive with my father (we were then living with him in London) and told me that he had taken her to a studio where he had gone to see a friend of his, called Mr. Frank Stone ; that they seemed very happy to meet, and talked a great deal, and that before coming away my father said to his friend, ' Do you remember painting my portrait over the picture of a lady with a guitar ? ' Mr. Stone said ' Of course I remember—I think I have it still,' and he went into a sort of dark cupboard and presently came out with a half-finished picture which he gave them, and they brought the canvas home in triumph in our little carriage. I can remember him laughing as he looked at it, and saying he could still make out the red sleeves of the lady's dress through the dark paint of the background. I have often tried to do so. The picture now hangs on the wall of my son's house in Hertfordshire. It represents my father as I never saw him, with curly brown hair ; there are no spectacles, dark eyes look out of a youthful, cheerful countenance. In another picture, the same eyes are repeated. It is that of my father's father, the same clear eyes and falling lids, which I have seen in others of the clan descended from the first William Makepeace Thackeray, who lived on Hadley Green and who left so many descendants. The portrait by Frank Stone must have been painted somewhere in the 'thirties, perhaps before the first of the two letters here given was written after my father had come abroad to study painting. It was as a painter that he had hoped to make his way rather than as a writer, and his heart always turned to the studios rather than to the inkpots. He

would have liked to read books instead of writing them, and to paint pictures instead of only looking at them, with and without spectacles; and the correspondence which has been kept by Mr. Arthur Stone, the son of Mr. Frank Stone, A.R.A., and the brother of Mr. Marcus Stone, R.A., shows what a charm painting and painters ever had for the writer of 'Vanity Fair.' In 1834 he had gone over to study art in Paris, and he was working at the Louvre and in a studio. In 1836 he had married and almost fixed his way of life, but he still looked backwards, and forwards too, to the time when he should be a painter again, and one can realise what he felt for the work and the workers. In my own youth all our happiest outings and holidays were when we went with him to see pictures finished and unfinished on the easels of those kind and friendly magicians who evoked the dreams and the realities. My father was twenty-four when the first of these two letters was written. Mr. Stone was thirty-seven, exhibiting at the Royal Academy, and already well known.

Letter folded without envelope, addressed to Frank Stone, Esqre., 84, Newman Street, Oxford Street. With postmark: 7, at Night. Ap. 20, 1835.

Your letter was the first of the batch, my dear Stone, and was more welcome to me even than the hot-cross buns which, on this day, our religion ordains that we should devour. I have been a little spooney ever since the perusal of the letter, but my tears (and there were one or two upon my honour) were those of a pleasant content, when I thought of the half-dozen good fellows who felt so kindly for me. God bless all the boys & watch over the liquors they drink & the pictures they draw. As for myself—I am in a state of despair—I have got enough torn-up pictures to roast an ox by—the sun riseth upon my efforts and goeth down on my failures, and I have become latterly so disgusted with myself & art & everything belonging to it, that for a month past I have been lying on sofas reading novels, and never touching a pencil.

In these six months, I have not done a thing worth looking at. O God, when will Thy light enable my fingers to work, & my colours to shine?—if in other six mos. I can do no better, I will arise & go out & hang myself.

We have an exhibition here with 2,500 pictures in it, of which about a dozen are very good—but there is nobody near Wilkie or Etty or Landseer—lots of history pieces or what they call here the

'école anecdotique'—little facts cut (out) of history and dressed in correct costumes—battles, murders & adulteries are the subjects preferred. Of costumes, I have amassed an awful collection, and this in truth is all I have done, except some infamous water-colour copies perpetrated at the Louvre when it was open. Now the old pictures are covered up until June, by the performances of the modern men; there are lots of six & thirty feet canvases, but not a good one among them. Here is as good a portrait painter as ever I saw, one Champ Marlin, who has been abused by the Athenaeum man. No good water-colours this year—though I have seen some by Roqueplan (who is a little snob, who condescended to do me out of a five-franc piece) that are as fine as Reynolds—most noble in point of colour, sentiment, force & so forth.

I wish you would tell me how you used to make that nice *grain*, I have tried all ways in vain. I had hoped to have gone into Germany for the summer, & on to Italy in Autumn, but my governors & the rest of our tribe are to come here in a month & I shall not be sorry to stay, & have a little more copying at the Louvre. Have you been asked to a tea-party by my Mamma? I wish you would call there some day, for you are a great favourite, & if you talk about the son of the house, you can't talk too much or stay too long. Mahony gives me great accounts of you & Mac. O happy men, you are on the high-road to fame & fortune—et moi, moi, pauvre jouet de la fortune, voyant jour par jour les espérances du matin moquées par les horribles réalités du soir. Je n'ai qu'à lutter, à me résigner, à me consoler de mes propres malheurs dans les succès de mes amis. With this flare up in the French tongue for the grammar of which I do not vouch, I must conclude my letter.

God bless you, my dear fellow. I thank you very much for your letter and for your feelings towards I who is most sincerely your friend,

W. M. T.

Two years later, my father writes again. He is married by this time and living in Paris, and one shares his wistful leanings towards that peaceful life of art, and that tranquil experience of effort after beauty, which was never to be quite his, though never quite denied to him all his life long.

There is a letter from Edward FitzGerald in 1845 to Frederick Tennyson:

'If you want to know something of the exhibition, read Fraser's Magazine for this month, Thackeray has a paper on the matter full of fun. I met Stone in the street the other day, and he told me with perfect sincerity and increasing warmth, how though he loved old Thackeray, these yearly out-speakings of his sorely tried him.'

The author of 'Vanity Fair' had not yet succeeded in climbing far upon the ladder of success, but Mr. Stone was now a painter to be looked to. From careful pencil drawings for the 'Book of Beauty' (how often in early youth has the writer pored admiringly over these lovely ladies), he had been elected Associate to the Water Colour Society, and then to the Royal Academy; then Associate to the Royal Water Colour Exhibition. His early works were engraved and very popular. 'The Last Appeal' will be remembered. It is a touching dramatic appeal—the young man looks at the hesitating maiden; there are other companion pictures of the same sort, 'The Old, Old Story,' 'Cross Purposes,' all engraved and admired for their graceful sentiment. The 'Dictionary of National Biography' writes of Frank Stone with courteous appreciation as the intimate friend of Dickens, the associate of the poets Campbell and Rogers, and of my father. He seems to have been one of the celebrated company of amateur players organised by Dickens, who went on tours, travelling north in the steps of Shakespeare and his companions. About 1850 Frank Stone exhibited various scenes from Shakespeare.

15BIS RUE NEUVE ST. AUGUSTIN, PARIS.
20 Jan. 1837.

MY DEAR STONE,—I have sent some drawings to London, which I want to be submitted to your Committee, and for which I hope you will act as the God-Father or Patron. I fear very much that my skill in the art is not sufficiently great to entitle me to a place in your Society, but I will work hard & please God improve,—perhaps also the waggish line which I have adopted in the drawings may render them acceptable, for variety's sake. There is no man, I think, except Hunt who amuses himself with such subjects. I hope you and Cattermole will say a good word for an old friend, and here I leave the business; confiding in friendship; trusting in Heaven; and pretty indifferent about failure, because I don't think I deserve success as yet.

I have sent the drawings to my Mother in Albion Street ; will you, like a bold fellow, take them under your charge and present them on the 1st Wednesday in Febry. before the astonished Board ? I wish I had had more time to work, but the newspaper work takes up most part of my time, and carries off a great deal of my enthusiasm. Mahony, who brings me news of the boys, says that you are all flourishing, and rich—Maclise with a fine house in Fitzroy Square, and Cattermole in possession of Windsor Castle, I think.

Cannot you manage a trip here ? Only twenty-five shillings and I promise you dinners, breakfasts and every delicate attention on Mrs. T.'s part and mine. Lewis was here, and very much to my disappointment, I never knew of it until his departure. My letter is very incoherent, and yet I am sober, but the fact is three women are chattering at my elbow and I can scarcely write or think.

I hope you go to see my mother sometimes, though I am sure you don't ; you are a great favourite with that old lady, and Miss Turner (my eldest daughter, Sir) is always asking about you.

Goodbye, my dear Stone, here is a very short letter, all about my own interests, but I have to write so hard for money, that I can't write for love. Send me a line about the lads and yourself, and salute them all for the sake of your old friend,

W. M. THACKERAY.

The letter is addressed on the back of the sheet :

Frank Stone, Esqre.,
Clarence Club.

(to be forwarded).

Mr. Arthur Stone remembers, as I do, a summer which we were all spending at Boulogne, we of the *ancienne garde* of the present, being then in cheerful prime as boys and girls, frequenting the shores and ramparts of Boulogne and the gardens of acacia and monthly roses round the charming somewhat mouldy houses and pavilions we inhabited, from which I can remember the Dickens family and the Stones issuing somewhat tumultuously, and Mr. Stone himself also standing there, portly, benevolent, tall, round-faced, surrounded by young people.

'Why of course I remember him,' writes my old friend, Mrs. Perugini ; 'I remember him from very early days, even before the Boulogne time. He always seemed to me a most delightful and most amiable giant, specially sent into this world for the amusement

of my sister and myself, and "the boys." He had a way of shaking out a beautiful mop of brown waving hair that was perfectly irresistible.'

Mr. Stone's youngest daughter inherited a crown of burnished gold which I can still see shining in the doorway of Messrs. Colnaghis' shop, one day when my father had crossed over to speak to her and to her brother;—she was married not long after to a son of John Sterling's. Her daughter lives on Campden Hill, in the house her parents built there.

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THE WET TRIANGLE

OR THE FREEDOM OF THE SEAS.

BY MAJOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE ASTON, K.C.B.

WHAT are the real issues dividing the nations in this vast and bitter struggle for the mastery? The world has been flooded with words by all the combatants. The Great General Staff at Berlin (the Kaiser's Frankenstein) have spread tentacles to the uttermost parts of the earth, like those of a gigantic cuttle-fish, to draw the nations to their destruction, and, like cuttle-fish when attacked, they are now trying to hide themselves in floods of ink. Take their propaganda about the Freedom of the Seas. What do they mean by it? How can the issues they have raised be determined? Let us try and judge by deeds rather than by abstract expressions intended to obscure the issues.

We will first look to the land for guidance, because it is there that our Arch-enemy first showed his character and intentions. Some think that enough has been written on the sufferings of Belgium. I do not agree. In these times, when we have at last realised that in a great war we must try to think in years rather than in weeks, it does sometimes help to be reminded of our original ideals when we are measuring our slow progress towards final success. We will take Belgium as our text, because there we find German ideals and the German character shining out so clearly that oceans of ink and floods of abstract expressions can never screen them.

Prussia guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium in 1839. The German Empire, through official channels, repeated the guarantee in 1911, 1913, and again on July 31, 1914. In those years the Great General Staff in Berlin were working out, and maturing to the last detail, a plan for pouring vast masses of troops across Belgium to strike a terrific blow against the French army from the direction likely to be most effective from the strategic point of view. The German Government lied deliberately about their intentions, because they hoped to obtain more decisive results if the blow could come as a surprise. They wanted to find their neighbours unprepared. In order to gain more time, they educated their fighting forces to believe that all means, however cruel,

horrible, and disgusting, might be resorted to, if success in war could not be ensured without their adoption. 'On strategical grounds,' as the Kaiser in his own handwriting told President Wilson on August 10, 1914, the German armies began to pour across the Belgian frontier, only three days after their Minister in Brussels had promised to respect Belgian neutrality. The Belgian civilian population offered no resistance. According to German accounts, they even received the invaders with friendliness,¹ and many acts of kindness.² After crossing the frontier the Germans, without any provocation, burned villages and parts of towns, shot and bayoneted the inhabitants—men, women, and children—drove them about in herds under terrible conditions of cruelty and privation, and used them as a screen from the fire of the Belgian army. They ravished and mutilated women, tortured prisoners, and committed other enormities. These measures were adopted deliberately 'on strategical grounds' to accelerate the rush across Belgium, and secure the vulnerable lines of communication of their armies, by cowing the spirit of the Belgian nation and army. To the nameless horrors committed by individuals or groups of German soldiers when beyond the control of their officers we need not refer in detail. The moral responsibility for these acts also rests upon those who gave the original order to kill civilians promiscuously and without trial.

Before this, a little more than a decade ago, the German campaign in South-west Africa had given the world an object lesson in their war methods. That war dragged on for several years, and the opposition of the Herreros in the Southern districts was finally overcome by the simple method of driving them into the Kalahari desert to die of thirst. Force was the only arbiter. The Ovambos, living in the Northern part of the Colony, were too numerous and too strong, so the Germans did not dare to attempt their conquest. Only the strong were safe from cruelty and complete national extinction. The civilised world did not take warning from the lesson. South-west Africa is a very long way from Europe.

When the history of the present war is written, many similar lessons will be learned from distant Africa.³ The poisoning of wells likely to be used by General Botha's troops; 'Infecting them

¹ German Chancellor (see *N.D. Allgemeine Zeitung*, Sept. 1914).

² See letters of German soldiers to their homes. (Appendix to Bryce Report.)

³ See *Parliamentary Blue-book*, Cd. 8306, July 1916, for proved examples of German atrocities in African campaigns.

with disease' as the official German instructions read in one of the proved cases: the tortures inflicted upon prisoners of war both in South-west and in East Africa: the murders and cruelty to natives of the Cameroons. And not only from Africa, but from all parts of the world accounts constantly come in of a similar war policy pursued by the Germans, and by others under their control, such as the Turks in Armenia. We need not prolong the list; the Belgian experience will suffice for us to deduce, from their deeds rather than from their words, the policy for which the Germans and their Allies are fighting. Germany, in their opinion, should rule the world, and, furthering this policy, force should be the only arbiter between nations. International agreements, moral laws, and so on, may possibly apply to individuals, but States, as such, should have no morality, no honour. The German troops proved clearly in Belgium, that as the creed of the State is, so is the creed of its servants. A policy said to be intended to produce by human endeavour the Super-Man has so far only succeeded in evolving the Super-Beast.

So much for the land. Let us now look to the sea. What does Germany mean by the 'Freedom of the Seas'? What would happen if, from what Herr Ballin has called the 'wet triangle' of the Heligoland Bight, she could sally forth in great might to enforce it?

In time of peace the high seas are free to all comers. It is only in their own harbours or territorial waters that nations can impose restrictions upon each other. Under existing conditions no great country can dispense with international sea traffic, so governments are careful to avoid measures likely to lead to retaliation. Before the war Great Britain stood alone in levying only an infinitesimal toll on imported goods. Judging by such statistics as we can obtain, Germany imposed on such imports a tax amounting to nearly 10 per cent. of their total value, compared with less than 5 per cent. imposed by Great Britain. Then again, complaints have at times been lodged by British Port authorities against official regulations of the British Government which enabled foreign shipping to use our commercial harbours on more advantageous terms than our own shipping! Foreign war-vessels, troop-ships, passenger liners, and freight ships had access even to our defended ports.

It seems quite clear that if, before August 1914, there were any harassing restrictions upon free intercourse by sea between

nations in time of peace, no blame for them could be attached to Great Britain, the greatest Naval Power.

What does Germany mean then by the Freedom of the Seas? Does she mean freedom for all in time of war? Does she wish to apply in her own interests in future the policy of lawless force at sea that she has applied on land in this particular war? What would that mean to the world? Again let us judge by deeds, rather than by her inky flood of words. We have kept her greatest engine of destruction—the so-called high-seas fleet—penned up in the 'wet triangle.' When any of her heavy ships have escaped beyond its boundaries, their mission has been to bombard the defenceless population of open towns on our East Coast, in the 'tip-and-run raids.' Our fast battle cruisers put a stop to those activities.

At the date when this paper is written, all the surface craft she has tried to employ in distant oceans have been sunk or captured by recognised methods of warfare, and when possible we have rescued the helpless survivors of the actions. In clearing the seas of her surface craft we have not transgressed our International obligations, or caused more inconvenience than we could help to neutral or friendly merchant ships passing upon their lawful occasions. We have been careful to preserve the lives of merchant crews of all nationalities, hostile or neutral.

What is Germany's record? We will take surface craft first, although it is beneath the surface that we shall find even clearer indications, which we will consider later. It was from South America that her *spurlos versenken*—sink at sight—policy was first disclosed to the whole world, together with her methods of conveying instructions to her sea assassins through neutral diplomatic representatives. Those instructions went to submarines, and we afforded such protection as we could to unarmed neutral shipping against such craft, by providing escorts of destroyers for them. Last October, two fast German raiders evaded the British watching squadrons on a dark night and, by their heavy armament, overpowered the destroyer escort of a convoy of unarmed neutral merchant ships. They then sunk, by gunfire, five Norwegian, one Danish, and three Swedish vessels, without examination or warning of any kind, and regardless of the lives of crew or passengers, whom they left to perish, after shelling and killing as many as possible of those who had taken to their boats. To leave no doubt about this act of piracy being deliberate, it was

boasted about by wireless from Berlin in a message which, in order to deceive their own people, contained the barefaced falsehood that the deed had been perpetrated 'within the territorial waters in the neighbourhood of the Shetland Islands.' Our Admiralty put the incident in its true light in the words: 'The German navy by this act has once more and further degraded itself by this disregard of the historic chivalry of the sea.'

The Admiralty used the expression 'once more' and evidently used it advisedly. Let us select another example. There are so many that it is difficult to make a choice. Perhaps the treatment of fishing craft will serve as well as another. We have lately heard that the indiscriminate destruction of fishing boats, and the terrible sufferings of the crews, have taught the population of Norway north of the Polar circle what the German threat of 'freedom' means to their peaceful interests on the sea. But few details have reached us of these sufferings, though we can imagine them in all their horror. Let us take a Dutch case. Last July, we read in a Dutch paper,¹ 'The executioner has done his work. . . . Despite all assurances and promises, notwithstanding all declarations and agreements, no fewer than six luggers of our Scheveningen fleet have been sent to the bottom . . . the opportunity is again taken from our stout, brave fisher-folk to earn a living . . . that no trouble is taken about the fate of shipwrecked men is universally known.' And this action, which robbed the population there of their principal food, was taken at a time when Holland was filled with German children hospitably and charitably received, and thousands of prisoners were also being fed by the Dutch.

These examples will serve to show what the Germans understand by 'the freedom of the seas' for unarmed neutral merchant shipping and fishing boats in time of war, as far as they have been allowed to disclose their meaning on the small parts of the surface of the sea available for their operations. But most of the surface has been denied to them; it is beneath it that we must look for even clearer indications of their policy.

Germany, immediately on the outbreak of war, laid mines secretly at sea in positions where they would destroy ships of all nationalities using the great highways of traffic between nations. No warning was published to the world. Only the activities of British seamen working at the imminent risk of their lives in

¹ *Eindhoven Dagblad*, July 30, 1917.

locating and removing the mines could save great passenger boats of all nations, with their precious freight of human life, being sent ruthlessly to the bottom. Some vessels, coming in from ocean voyages, would have left distant harbours long before there seemed to be any prospect of the peace being disturbed by Germany and her Allies. The most appalling loss of life amongst non-combatants of all nations was saved by the British seamen, who located and destroyed the mines and swept safe channels; by the Admiralty announcing the positions of all known mine-fields, and by the pilots who showed the way through them.

We now come to the notorious U-boats. By their help Germany has treated merchant seamen, and defenceless civilian passengers of all nations, as she treated the population of Belgium. She has murdered them without pity—men, women, and little children. There have not been quite the same opportunities for inflicting prolonged torture or mental suffering as on land, but, where such chances have presented themselves, they have sometimes not been neglected.

The war methods of Germany are summed up in her War Book as 'Violence and Cunning.' Let us study a few typical examples of the violence applied by her U-boat commanders, the accounts being gathered from reliable sources.

Take first the treatment of the defenceless crew of the British s.s. *Belgian Prince* last July. She was torpedoed at sea without warning and seemed to be sinking. The crew of forty-three took to their boats. They were all unarmed. The armed Germans deprived them of their life-belts, made them stand on the deck of the submarine, and then smashed the boats with axes. The Germans then went below, taking the Master of the ship with them, but leaving the forty-three of the crew on deck. They then closed the hatch and went ahead, so as to get well away from the hull of the *Belgian Prince*, which might perhaps have supported their victims until rescued, if they had been able to swim. They then submerged, and thereby murdered in cold blood forty of the defenceless crew by drowning them deliberately. Three, one of whom was Mr. Thomas Bowman, the chief engineer, succeeded in swimming until they were picked up. The affidavits of the survivors, taken separately and without collusion, can be read in the 'Times' of August 14, 1917, on page 3. In the words of the Admiralty announcement, 'the cold-blooded murder equals, if it does not transcend, the worst crimes which our enemies have committed against

humanity.' It hardly equalled, and certainly did not transcend, some of the previous examples of German interpretation of the freedom of the seas in war time—for instance, their cruelty to wounded and dying combatant foes in hospital ships, and to noble women trying to alleviate their sufferings.

When it was seen that the original war plan was doomed to failure, that there was no longer any prospect of the German armies being able to secure a victory by their unprovoked attacks on neighbouring nations: when country after country joined in the crusade to limit the area of devastation, and avenge their crimes, then the U-boat warfare was intensified. The mask was thrown off, and cold and calculated cruelty was the order. Ships were sunk without warning hundreds of miles from land, and crews left to their fate. The object was to destroy all the merchant shipping in the world, enemy and neutral, firstly, in order to prevent munitions and reinforcements being sent to the armies of the Allies, and, above all, to cut off the British Isles from sea communication; secondly, to free the German mercantile marine from competitors when peace came. Hospital ships represented a certain portion of the world's tonnage. They were protected by various international agreements subscribed to by Germany, and their names were all communicated to her government. They were brilliantly illuminated by night, and their customary voyages were a matter of common knowledge. Here was an opportunity for destroying tonnage not to be missed. To deceive the gullible German people, and try to deceive the—fortunately less gullible—people of other countries, an untrue accusation was made against Great Britain of carrying troops and munitions in her hospital ships. There had previously been very sad cases of hospital ships being lost through striking mines laid broadcast on the seas to destroy all vessels, belligerent or neutral, that might strike them. These cases we will not count. Since November 1916 many British hospital ships have been struck, of which some were sunk; several were proved to be struck by torpedoes, one struck a mine, and for the others either torpedo or mine was the instrument of destruction; it is not always possible to prove definitely the source of the underwater explosions. We will take one of the clearly proved cases.

The British hospital ship *Asturias* was torpedoed during the night of March 26-27, 1917. She was steaming with her navigating lights shining, and all the proper distinguishing Red Cross signals brilliantly illuminated. Anyone who has seen hospital

ships pass down the coast at night will know what this means. They are a blaze of light, and look like floating hotels. The torpedoing of this one was included in the list of achievements claimed by U-boats in the next German wireless press message! Of those on board, thirty-one lost their lives, twelve, including a nurse and a stewardess, were reported missing, and thirty-nine were injured. The sufferings of the survivors can be pictured without description. Using every merciful appliance which science can invent, it is difficult to transfer wounded from a specially fitted ambulance boat to a ship, without pain and injury. Imagine what it must be to transfer them at sea from a sinking ship to various sorts of rescuing vessels, not specially designed for the purpose. Think, for instance, of the difficulty in getting them up the side and down the steep narrow hatchway of a destroyer or a fishing vessel, tossing about in a seaway.

To try and justify this horror in the eyes of their own people or of the world was beyond the power even of the German wireless. All that was done was to repeat the original accusation, unsupported by evidence and already contradicted, about carrying troops and munitions. The British Government had pointed out that the obvious remedy, if Germany really suspected any such practice, was to 'exercise the right of visit and search—a remedy which has never been exercised.'

It was not until four months had passed that the Germans attempted to quote a definite case of ammunition being carried in a hospital ship. They were unfortunate in their attempt. They quoted the s.s. *Varela*, in Mesopotamia, which was not a hospital ship at the time of the alleged incident, but a transport. She became a hospital ship nine months afterwards, the German Government having been notified in the usual manner.

Then, vying with the examples quoted of pitiless cruelty, was the case of the *Lusitania*, torpedoed in broad daylight by a German submarine at 2.13 P.M. on May 7, 1915, ten miles from the nearest land. She sank at 2.33. She was an unarmed liner, crowded with passengers, women, and children. The details of the massacre and the sufferings of the survivors are still fresh in our minds. We need not give further details here.

These are examples of Violence in the interests of the 'Freedom of the Seas' in war time, as demonstrated by Germans, and now for Cunning. We must here quote the actual words of their War Book, which throw some light upon what follows.

'What is permissible includes every means of war without which the object of war cannot be obtained.

'International law is in no way opposed to the exploitation of the crimes of third parties (assassination, incendiarism, robbery and the like) to the prejudice of the enemy.'

From the second of these quotations we can assume that, according to the ideas of the German Government, a belligerent is justified in applying any means of warfare which are so horrible that international lawyers have not thought it necessary to forbid their employment.

For many months hardly a day has passed without reports appearing in the newspapers about the doings of spies and secret agents in every country. In October we read of the help that spies in the Russian Baltic islands afforded to the German amphibious expedition. They were on Russian soil, presumably undetected. Then we read of German agents in the Scandinavian countries and elsewhere reporting the movements of merchant ships to help submarines or raiders to sink them. From the whole American continent similar reports constantly come in. Plot after plot by German agents to destroy life and stir up internal strife comes from every country in the world, but it is with the sea, rather than the land, that we are specially concerned.

By the cunning of German agents, to whom neutral countries have tendered and are still tendering their hospitality, our opponents have tried to introduce high explosives, carefully concealed, into the cargoes of merchant ships, not only of enemy but also of neutral countries. Their object in doing so has been to blow up the vessels on the high seas, thereby murdering their crews and passengers. Official proofs of these incidents will be forthcoming on the day of reckoning that is surely coming. Attempts, some of them successful, to destroy British merchant ships in this way are very numerous. We will take an example of a neutral. The Norwegian s.s. *Gyldenpris* loaded at New York in January 1917. Her after-peak was not cleaned out until July 18, when she was proceeding in ballast, having discharged her last cargo at Naples. Two bombs, containing dynamite, were found in the after-peak, under the ship's effects. They were fitted with detonators, which had failed to explode as intended.

Let us here take note of the fact that a vast toll has been taken of Norwegian shipping, and the lives of over six hundred Norwegian merchant seamen had been sacrificed by the end of last September,

many of their vessels being lost at sea and unaccounted for. The shipping of other neutral countries has suffered in proportion. The placing of bombs in cargoes has been traced to German agents in so many cases that there can be no doubt that to these German advocates of the freedom of the seas must be attributed the loss of many vessels, sailing under the flags of neutral countries, and reported missing with their whole crews. Three men, described as the last of the most dangerous gang of German plotters in the United States, have lately been arrested, and charged with making and distributing bombs which, in 1915, were placed in the holds of thirty merchant vessels! It is difficult to imagine any government but that of Germany conceiving such a method as this of making even neutral merchant seamen the victims of their spite.

Judged by their deeds then, instead of their wordy propaganda, the ideal for which our enemies say they are fighting, the 'Freedom of the Seas,' means in time of war the murder, possibly by a lingering death, of the crews and passengers of merchant ships of all nations—men, women, and little children—by whatever cruel methods Violence and Cunning, the gods of the Great General Staff, can devise. This must be their meaning unless all fighting at sea can be prevented. And how can it be? Do the Germans maintain that this is what they mean? If so, what guarantee would they, who have violated every international obligation, whose ideals in war are summed up by themselves in the words Violence and Cunning, be able to give that they would not prepare secretly in time of peace the means to sink every merchant ship in the world, excepting their own, whenever it suited the policy of their ruling class?

But this is not all. Would they propose also to abolish all armies? How then could they rule their own people, and drill them to believe fantastic falsehoods about the hostile intentions of other Powers? Machine-guns are the educators by which they ensure the marvellous credulity of the masses of the German peoples. Given an army for home use, what is to prevent their using it for invasion of other countries—not only the nations who have the misfortune to be their neighbours, but all the nations in the world? With all fighting at sea prevented, if it ever could be prevented, all countries could be laid waste by the Hunnish horde of Super-beasts that were let loose upon the wretched population of Belgium in 1914, and have ruled over them by cruelty and terror ever since.

Let us try to look at the matter from the German point of

view. They have proved themselves to be a predatory race, constantly preparing for wars, and beginning them by hitting first and invading their neighbours' countries, which then become the field of warlike operations. Everything going to these countries could then be regarded as destined for the field of operations, and liable to capture, while similar goods going to Germany would be presumed to be for non-combatants and exempt. Is that what they mean by some of their propaganda? Or is it to be the proverbial 'Heads I win, tails you lose,' of our school-days?

If the Germans do not mean any of these things by the 'Freedom of the Seas,' what do they mean? If they mean the predominance of the German over the British Navy, we are ready to fight to a finish on that issue. Free access to the oceans of the world in peace and in war is our very life. We have held it unchallenged for a hundred years, and during that time we have kept unsullied the honour of the White Ensign. Whether as belligerents or as neutrals, we have respected international agreements about the conduct of warfare upon the high seas, and sorely we have suffered at times from such agreements. The nations of the earth could easily have combined to wrest from us the sovereignty of the seas if we had betrayed the trust our fathers bequeathed to us. Until forced to raise one to help other nations, against unprovoked attacks by Germany, we had no army strong enough to hurt Continental Powers, so there was no possibility of our making the attempt. They all knew this, and they knew that our people would never support an aggressive policy.

Let us have done with this endless warfare of abstract terms. Neither the British people, nor the Commonwealth of Nations under the British Crown, are willing to give the Germans the opportunity of spreading over the seas their abominable doctrines, of Force, of Violence and Cunning, uncontrolled by morality or honour, as the sole arbiters between nations.

By the 'Freedom of the Seas' we mean free and unfettered access in time of peace, to all oceans, by all who wish to cross them upon their lawful occasions. In the time of war we mean that this privilege must be fought for by belligerent navies, causing as little inconvenience as possible to neutrals, but that the right of searching neutral merchant ships must be maintained in order to verify their nationality, and to prevent their aiding an enemy. Let the Germans omit the expression from their peace propaganda until they have furnished an equally clear definition.

We know what Grand Admiral von Tirpitz means. He has told the world quite clearly: 'I know of only one way, and that is that we (*sic*) do away with England's policing of the sea.'¹ What are police for? The suppression of crime. To what does he object? To the prevention of crime at sea? or to the nationality of the police?

But is the view of Tirpitz the view of the German peoples? 'To-day,' said a Radical Deputy in the Reichstag on about October 10, 'the battle is between Tirpitz and the majority of the German nation.' And the statement was endorsed by a cry of 'Quite true!' But it is only by the sanction of the nation that the German Navy is still producing sea pirates, like those whose crimes we have studied. If the German peoples really oppose the Tirpitz view of the 'Freedom of the Seas,' let them provide a more plausible interpretation; in the meantime all the nations of the earth will pray for us to pen them in their 'Wet Triangle,' and many will help in the operation.

¹ *Neues Pester Journal*—see *Times*, Oct. 1, 1917.

A CANADIAN AT YPRES.

II. IN A GERMAN HOSPITAL.

AFTER many stops and starts we at last reached a dug-out; it wasn't the real dressing station, but the young German, who was really very intelligent, thought it advisable to stop and rest here for a while as I was fairly exhausted. He shouted something to some fellows in the dug-out, and two of them came out and helped him to carry me in. In this place there was a medical chest full of everything necessary for the dressing of wounds.

They laid me down on a sort of hammock, and getting some stuff from the chest, they managed to dress my wounds very nicely. In order to get at my shoulder they had to rip the tunic off me. When I was dressed I felt fairly comfortable. They then got some cold coffee (the Germans seldom drink water in the trenches—they use cold coffee, which makes a very good drink, as many of our fellows can testify), and tried to give me a drink, but I was unable to swallow. I lay here for about two hours, and as I was now very wide awake and not a bit delirious I had a good opportunity to examine a German dug-out.

It was a beautifully built place, dug far down into the earth. There were steps of concrete leading down to a kind of hall; the interior or real part of the dug-out led out of this entrance at right angles, thus protecting the occupants from a shell which should chance to land right in the trench. It was absolutely bomb-proof; while I was there several of our shells burst right over the dug-out without making the slightest impression.

The floor was also made of concrete. It had a very high ceiling, and was as large as an ordinary dining-room. The roof, I think, was made of steel, but as the light was rather poor I wouldn't be quite sure.

In these dug-outs the Germans spend most of their time when not on duty. Only the men on duty are in the trench.

When passing along the trench we went through bay after bay without a single man in them. Their trenches are good, and very deep, but not a bit better than our own. In many places there were big gaps caused by our artillery. The Germans seem to be very much afraid of our artillery. I saw many of them,

when our large shells would be heard approaching, running excitedly up and down the bay they were in, looking for some kind of overhead cover, no doubt; although their trenches are deep, and to all appearance quite safe unless a shell happened to drop right in, they couldn't keep still. From this dug-out I was carried in a stretcher to the dressing station, where I met the German doctors for the first time.

They immediately got busy with me. The bandage was taken off and the wounds thoroughly examined and washed out with alcohol. When I was again bandaged up the doctors inoculated me against typhoid and injected morphine. When they had finished with me, I was handed over to the Red Cross men.

I was carried from here to a light railway, where I was put on a truck and taken out to the road. Here I was put into a motor ambulance car and driven to the field hospital at Menin. As I was being taken from the car quite a large crowd of Belgians, men and women, had gathered round to see who was being taken in to hospital. When they saw my khaki, I heard a whisper go round them—'English, English.' They were all most eager to have a look, and in spite of the Germans many of them smiled and waved encouragingly to me: the women showed more signs of sympathy than the men; the men contented themselves by whispering to each other.

I was no sooner in bed than I was surrounded by the German wounded who weren't confined to bed: some of them who knew a little English were pushed to the front and urged by their companions to speak to me and ask a few questions. They did so, but as I am not by any means an expert in gibberish, I wasn't able to make head or tail of what they were trying to say. It was a horrible conglomeration; all I could make out was some 'ichs' and 'achs' and the inevitable 'Kamerad.' They were all very nice, and anxious to let me see that they felt friendly towards me. In a few minutes an officer came along and they very soon—like all 'old soldiers'—faded away. This officer, who commanded a battery of artillery at Ypres, was, as he told me in conversation, a professor of physics.

He could speak excellent English. He had come, as he said, to make me feel easy as to my position. He told me I was no longer 'the enemy,' 'but an honourable wounded prisoner of war.' He asked me if I was feeling well enough to converse with him; I told him I didn't feel well, but I would certainly like to talk with

him. He had given me a pencil and writing-pad to write all I wanted to say. After he had propped me up in bed comfortably we proceeded to talk. Of course I was aware of the danger of saying too much about military matters, so I determined to know nothing. But as it turned out he asked me no questions about military matters, 'For,' as he said, 'I don't want to take advantage of your weakness, nor do I want you to write too much. I will do all the talking.' The first thing he did was to write two postcards for me letting my people know what had happened to me. Then he proceeded to deny the accusations of the Allies that the Germans were barbarians. He said the German people were a kind, gentle race and deplored the terrible war. He assured me that the doctors would do all in their power to pull me through, and that their specialists would exercise all their skill in fixing my jaw, so far as anything could be done with it. He asked me what I was in civil life, and when I said I was an organist, he was interested, as one of his best friends was an organist; but he said, 'I am afraid, Allan, you will have to give that up if you live, for it is a question if you will ever speak again.' He said my wounds were grievous, 'but as soon as you can be moved you will be sent to England.'

I must say his summing up of my wounds and my chance of a good recovery was not very cheering; still, I didn't believe that I would die, nor could I think I would never speak again. I wasn't so sure, though, about having to give up my profession. In spite of the gloomy outlook, I didn't feel at all depressed. I was absolutely content to be again in a good bed and have people working round me to help me through. I thought 'sufficient for the day was the evil thereof.' The future didn't matter a great deal just then: it was enough to come through such experiences as I had come through in the past two days and to feel that I was still alive and likely to live to meet some other kind of trouble in the days to come.

I was determined not to pity myself, as I believe self-pity is the greatest drawback to one's recovery. I never did pity myself at any time. I always minimised my injuries and dreamed of complete recovery with a whole jaw. In this way my life was made bearable even though I had to take all my nourishment for two months through a tube. It takes an effort to be optimistic on a starving body that can only be fed with liquids. However, it can be done, and is done every day by the soldiers in this war.

This officer visited me every day while he was in the hospital;

he went back to his battery, and I never saw him again: before going he got another fellow who could speak English to keep his eye on me and talk to me occasionally. I appreciated the attentions of the artillery officer very much indeed; he appeared to be a very fine fellow—quite a different stamp from some I met later.

On the morning of June 4 I was taken into the operating theatre, which was full of doctors and nurses. They appeared to be much interested in my case. I was on the operating-table over an hour; there was washing, picking, cutting, and scraping going on at a lively pace. The chief doctor appeared to be in a rage about something; he called the Red Cross men and questioned them about some matter; the men shook their heads and replied 'Kaffee' (coffee). I began to wonder what all the fuss was about; there seemed to be something wrong with my wounds. The doctor poured a whole bottle of some strong acid over my jaw wound. While he was doing so he asked me if the stuff burned; but it didn't.

It was at this time I got my first drink of water; it was given to me by a tube passed through the wound and put down my throat. In this way I had the finest drink I ever drank.

In the course of a few days I learned that my wound had been poisoned by something. The doctor asked me if I knew what had done it. I wrote that I rather feared that I did: it must have been the water I tried to drink from the rum jar. Since it had poisoned my wound so that the doctor was alarmed, it must have been, not water, but some other stuff, probably what was used for spraying the trench. From now on I was fed through a tube; for the first two days I had nothing but sugar and water. Later on I got some wine and milk. I was the only Englishman in the large ward I was in; all the rest were Germans.

I suppose the Germans would be saying at the time of the battle that they had few casualties; well, if they had, this field hospital directly behind the scene of the fight was full of their wounded, and most of the cases had just come in. It gave me great satisfaction to know that, in spite of the great odds against us, we had inflicted terrible punishment on them.

I saw some horrible wounds here; some of the poor fellows were literally broken in pieces. A great number of them were clean out of their minds. As I was unable to get sleep for the first three or four days, I was able to hear all that went on. One young fellow in a bed across from me annoyed and worried me greatly.

He would start up in bed and keep calling most of the night, 'Schneider! Schneider!' This would be hissed out in a hoarse, frightened voice. He seemed to be afraid of something, and wanted to get in touch with some companions. However, he turned out to be a German. Another fellow was having a great time calling on his 'Gretchen' and 'Mein Vater, mein Vater!' One big fellow at the bottom of the ward contented himself by roaring like a bull. This was all very interesting, but it didn't lull me to sleep.

Towards midnight I generally got an injection of morphine, which gave me great relief from pain, but, strange to say, wouldn't make me sleep; but it made me see things. I would be, at one time, back in the trenches dodging shells, another time burying an enormous cable which would always persist in coming to the top again; at other times I would be alone in the trench, and it would be night, and the ghosts of the boys who I knew were killed would come to watch beside me and try to persuade me to make the plunge and join them where they said there was no pain nor thirst, but lots of beautiful sleep and perpetual peace.

Sometimes I would get out of bed and have a look round. A pet practice of mine was to take my pillow and go to the bottom of the bed and lie there for a little; very soon I would go back again to the top. This would go on for a long time: I would smile to myself and wonder what the doctor would say if he saw me. This performance usually ended in my getting up and pretending to make my bed. Needless to say, the bed and I were always in a muddled condition in the morning. The orderly could never understand why my bed-clothes should be tied in a knot, and the doctor was puzzled at my weakness and my high temperature.

I was in a bed that was partitioned off; there was a number of these special beds for the serious cases. Of course there was one side that was open; I was able to see most of the ward from my bed. There was a German in a bed opposite mine whom I took a dislike to at first sight. He appeared to cherish the same sentiments towards me. He wasn't a bad-looking fellow at all; in fact rather good-looking, with an intelligent face. He seemed to have the hate fever rather bad, judging by the looks he gave me. This is a special malady peculiar to some types of Germans. This fellow had orderlies and nurses running after him all the time: he was eternally whining and complaining; his wounds were very slight too. He asked the doctor one morning to be removed from my vicinity. The doctor asked him why. 'Oh,' he said,

'I hate these "schweinhunds"' (pig dogs). I think he expected the doctor to applaud his fine Germanic sentiments. If he did, he must have been disappointed, for the doctor warmly chastised him, and almost hit him. One of the orderlies who could speak English and was very friendly towards me told me all about it. I told the orderly to give the fellow my compliments and say that I was sorry that I didn't meet earlier in the game such a fine soldierly specimen. He was the only one of that type I had anything to do with.

I was visited every day by two Belgian nuns who were very kind to me. They always brought a very fine drink with them containing wine, milk, eggs, and iron. They kept this up till the doctor stopped them as the wine was raising my fever.

One day the doctor brought a Belgian priest in to me. Along with the priest came some nuns. The priest spoke to me for a long time and was very nice indeed. He hadn't much use for the Germans. Being a priest, he exhorted me to pray, and prayed for me himself. He told me his church was also praying for me. I must confess, though, I didn't pray; I was too sick to bother much about where I was or was likely to go to. I didn't object to his praying. He had an idea that my days were very short and that prayer was necessary. I hadn't many ideas about anything, so was unable to see the importance of prayer.

In the daytime I required all my strength to breathe and struggle with what little liquid I could take. It is a funny thing that I should have been able to get up and muddle around while under the influence of morphine: my midnight performance left me so weak during the day that I could scarcely raise my head. In fact I couldn't do so without assistance. Of course I was very grateful to the priest and his church for praying for me, as I believe that the prayer of good men availeth much. God doesn't expect a man to pray who is struggling for his very life. When Christ raised Jairus' daughter from the dead He didn't say 'Let us pray for the damsel'—no, He said 'Give the damsel something to eat.' We must have our bodies clean, pure, and strong if possible, before all else. Some people in an extremity think there is nothing to do but pray to God. I don't; I believe in carrying on right along till something has been accomplished. Nevertheless, the priest could pray, so here's to him.

I remained in this hospital about a week, and on the whole had very good treatment. There was only one day in which I could

say I was neglected. It was my worst day, too. On this day the doctor didn't come near me till long after dinner. I had had no food from the previous night, and, what was more serious, had no dressing. I was in a dreadful condition; my fever rose in an alarming manner. When the doctor did come I was so weak I couldn't move. I complained to him, and asked him why he hadn't come before. Of course he cleared himself; he said it was the orderly's fault; the orderly should have visited me first thing in the morning to dress my wounds and give me some food.

This was just an excuse, for the orderly told me afterwards that he was warned not to touch me as the doctor said he wanted to watch the progress of my wounds himself. However, from that day I got good attention. The doctor himself visited me three times a day and dressed my wounds; in between times the orderly did some dressing too. The doctor also visited me every night at midnight, put on fresh dressings, and gave me morphine. It is only fair to say that the doctor was very busy with fresh cases coming in, as the fighting round Zillebeke was still going on fiercely. From my bed I could hear the heavy rolling of the big guns which were firing day and night.

On the morning of June 11 I left Menin to go to Germany, where I had to meet some wonderful specialists who would make me all over again and do a number of marvellous things. The German orderlies and some of the wounded soldiers told me great things of these specialists—they were simply diabolical in their cleverness, and so on. I took all they said with reserve; I hoped all they said was true, but I was dubious. I hadn't seen any wonderful thing that was German so far. I was quite content to wait till I got to England, where I knew the surgeons were really skilful. The reputation the Germans have got for organisation, they have in their army, and it is good, but we have in two years built up one just as good as theirs, and it took them forty years. Our organisation at the front is the finest thing in this war; anybody who has seen it in operation will tell you so. Our newspapers are entirely responsible for Germany's reputation as organisers.

If the Germans were the organisers and the strategical geniuses they are touted up to be, they should have won this war by the Christmas of 1914. They had everything in their favour—guns, ammunition, millions of trained men; there is absolutely no excuse for them—they should have won the war. And why didn't they? Bad organisation and strategy. Instead of running for Paris

they should have secured Calais and the coast : they could have done it quite easily. Look at the mess they made of the Verdun affair : why, the thing is as clear as day—bad method ! When the train, which was a regular Red Cross hospital train, left Menin, it didn't set out directly for Germany. For practically a whole day we went from place to place picking up wounded. When all were collected we set out for Stuttgart via Brussels, Liège, Aix-la-Chapelle, and the Rhine Valley. The train was a huge one ; hundreds of wounded were on board ; there must have been over twenty coaches. Most of the wounded were German. About fifty Canadians arrived at Stuttgart, nine of whom were Princess Patricia's, the remaining C.M.R.s. While we went through the Rhine Valley the weather was lovely, but I was not permitted to see any of the scenery, being unable to look out of the window. However, I wasn't exactly in a sight-seeing mood, so I didn't worry on that score. There were three C.M.R.s in one compartment beside me, Captain Lattimer, Privates Baller and Macbeth. There was a nurse and an orderly for two compartments. The food on board the train was good ; the fellows were also supplied with cigarettes. As there were no facilities on the train for feeding me I had to go without. This was no great hardship as I didn't feel like eating, or rather drinking. There was a doctor on board who dressed my wounds several times. We were two days and two nights on the train. On the night of June 12 we arrived at Stuttgart, but had to sleep on board, and were taken off in the morning, June 13. It was a great delight to see the stretchers lined up on the station platform. Hundreds of Red Cross men and nurses were in attendance. Germans and English lay side by side. I only lay on the platform a few minutes ; I was one of the first to reach the hospital, and was in bed half an hour after leaving the train. Only the Canadians were taken to the Third Reserve Hospital, the Germans went elsewhere. The hospital in pre-war times was a 'Rollschuhbahn' (roller-skating rink). It was a very fine place indeed ; spacious, clean, and beautifully finished. I didn't care much for the decorations ; they were crude and vulgar, like the people themselves in many ways. At one end of the building there was a fine stage, where an orchestra used to play and where pantomimes have been performed. A broad gallery encircled the hall. There was every convenience, a good washing room and baths, abundance of electric lights, steam heating, &c. We had a garden to promenade in when able to get

up. The hospital boasted a staff of six doctors (civilian) ; six sisters, who were all nuns ; an adjutant of medical staff and an adjutant interpreter ; a host of inspectors, clerks, orderlies, cooks, and a few ladies who gave their services as dispensary clerks. In addition to the six doctors, a special surgeon visited the hospital when any serious operation had to be performed.

German missionaries visited us every week, and each Sunday a priest came to preach to the French prisoners, who were all Catholics. We were supplied with plenty of good books in English ; Mr., or rather Herr, Schenkel, our missionary, supplied most of the books. Just before I left Stuttgart, Mr. Wheeler, an American Y.M.C.A. man, started to visit us. He brought some more books and a few good games. He also undertook to arrange for lectures on various subjects and organise a Bible class for Sundays. I left before these were in operation, but I have since heard from one of my chums, who is still there, that lectures and classes are in full swing. I should have said before, that as soon as we were fairly in German hands, all letters, money, and, in fact, everything we had in our possession was taken away from us. We were supposed to get all our belongings back when we were removed from hospital, but my letters were never returned ; some of them I valued very much.

We were the first British soldiers that the Stuttgart people had anything to do with, consequently there was quite a 'Strafe' on for a while at first. The doctors treated us in silence, the sisters looked on us with suspicion, and the orderlies were quite hostile. We were the hated ones, the 'Principal Enemy.' The French, poor people, were mere pawns in our hands ; they were our stepping-stone, as it were, to world domination. There was, and is still, a great attempt on the part of the Germans to sever the French from the British by a propaganda scheme through the medium of a special paper printed in French by the Germans and distributed to the French prisoners. This paper, which was called *Gazette des Ardennes*, made some show at supplying 'official' war *communiqués*. The editorials every day were full of 'Perfidious Albion.' Needless to say, these editorials had no effect on the French, because of their intense hatred of the Boche.

We folks of the British Empire will have to love each other dearly in the future, for we are a large family that gets along very nicely, and which will still have to have itself well insured by the best insurance—love and unity.

We gave the Germans no opportunity to inflict punishment on us ; we carefully observed all the rules, were polite, and kept our own counsel and our own company.

There were in this hospital about 250 beds, most of which were occupied. Until we arrived only French and Russians were the occupants of these beds ; so it was quite a novelty to have British, particularly Canadians. I like the Russians ; they are solid, sincere, and trustworthy.

After we were all fairly settled in our new home, and had been examined and dressed by the doctors, it was quite amusing to see our fellows stretching their necks to see if they knew any of their companions in exile. Across the way from my bed I noticed a face that looked familiar, but I couldn't place it at all. This boy saw me watching him, so he too wondered where he might have seen me. Of course a recognition in the ordinary sense was out of the question, as we had all been cruelly changed ; we could only catch impressions, and it is difficult to establish a recognition from an impression. However, we were soon helped out of the maze ; over each bed there was a blackboard on which was inscribed the name of the patient, his diet, and an account of his wounds. In an hour or so over the head of the one I was interested in was printed in clear type 'Brown.' When I saw that, I immediately recognised one of my own regiment and company, but, as I said before, in a sadly altered condition. Of course, in spite of my name going up he couldn't recognise me on account of my injuries. I question very much if my nearest friends could have done so. Later on in the day his bed was placed beside mine, so we finally established our identity. I got my writing-pad out, and we were very soon exchanging experiences. He and I were great pals from that time, and shared our joys, sorrows, and eats (when they arrived) with each other.

He had just arrived from Havre the night before the attack, so his experience of trench life was short, but very stormy. He was in supports when the storm burst. All through the long and terrible bombardment he had escaped without injury, and was able with a few more companions to put up a very fine fight when the German hordes swept down upon our trenches. Their only cover was a tree that had been knocked down by a shell ; they used this till the Germans were right on top of them, so they beat it further back, and again took fresh cover and commenced peppering away at the onrushing hordes. Very soon they were surrounded and,

on making a last dash to get back from the horrible inferno through the enemy ranks, most of them were hit, including Brown. Even then they thought they could get through, so Brown and a companion, assisting another boy who was more seriously injured, staggered through the hail of lead to a trench where they thought to make their escape good, but when about to enter the trench a German officer and a large number of men were waiting for them with levelled rifles; thus the game was up, as their rifles were slung owing to assisting a companion who was worse off than themselves; I think this boy either died or was killed by a chance shot just as they reached the trench.

I won't attempt to relate the experiences of the other men, interesting and fascinating as they all are; nor do I intend to mention their names as this is a purely personal narrative. Suffice it to say we all had the same treatment at the hands of the Germans, and when I describe my own experiences in Germany I very largely relate theirs too.

At first I was examined and my wounds dressed twice every day; nothing was done during the night; we didn't even have the sisters; only one orderly kept watch over the two hundred patients. Many of us needed attention during the long night, too, but we had to comfort ourselves with the hope that sleep would come to our aid in fighting with fever, pain, and anxiety; sometimes it did—sometimes. However, as the days went past, we felt better, and the Germans began to take greater interest in us, and even went so far as to like us.

I got all my food through a tube; the sister fed me at first, but after a few days a Frenchman who was able to be up was detailed to look after me, and see that I took my food. All the work of cleaning, sweeping, &c., was done by the patients.

The hospital was swept three times daily, and the floors washed every alternate day. Everything was kept scrupulously clean, and every sanitary precaution was taken. Operations were performed every morning; our men were having their legs amputated at a very lively rate; some had hands amputated, and two or three had an eye taken out. I venture to say, if these men had been picked up by our own people and taken to British hospitals, they would have their limbs to-day, and three of them who died would still be alive: these deaths were due to lack of proper treatment, and to dilly-dallying on the part of the German doctors. I wasn't long in hospital till I had my doubts confirmed that the German

specialists were highly over-rated, and I should be lucky if they sewed my face up in a presentable way: the being 'made over again' business was merely a dream on the part of my German 'companions' at the hospital in Menin.

There isn't really much to relate about my life in Germany; one day was much like another. The day began at 7 o'clock; all beds were made, patients washed, and hospital swept before breakfast, which was at 7.30. Breakfast consisted of coffee without sugar, and brown bread without butter; as I could only take liquids, my breakfast was made on this fine coffee, which, by the way, was only suitable for Germans. I dreaded the drinking of this coffee more than the morning dressing; one can always put up with pain, but how many can overcome the nausea caused by unpalatable food? I had to drink the coffee too. I think the sisters looked on the drinking of that stuff as a religious rite. If the stuff was too much for me, and I left some of it, the sister would screw up her face and say 'Al-lan, if you—not—trink—you—die.' Ah well, I thought, it is in a good cause; I always was an enemy of absurd concoctions.

The dressing operations commenced at eight, and usually took most of the morning. Woe betide the man, whether German or a prisoner, who made the slightest noise during this period. Silence is absolutely necessary to the smooth working of the German brain, it is so peculiarly constructed. The Germans love (next best to seeing a man salute) the exhilarating effect of watching men standing at attention for hours. Any man who is liable to sneeze, or who has acquired the habit of flapping his ears, had better not become a prisoner in Germany. Gentleness wasn't the watchword of the German sisters; the pain they inflict on a man was a matter of the least importance. One can excuse roughness if it is backed up by efficiency, but when it is accompanied by inefficiency it is a crime. Some of the sisters were quite capable, but others were anything but that. The doctors took no part in the dressings; they merely stood by looking on, and, we must assume, intelligently superintending. Occasionally they would rouse themselves and seem to take an interest in things; this usually meant a wire thrust into your wounds just by way of intimating to you that it is a doctor's duty to make you squirm.

Our doctor could speak good English, but he religiously refrained from speaking to us in our own language. I discovered he could speak good English quite by accident; some high official had called one day and seemed interested in my case—he wanted to know a few things regarding my wounds, and what inflicted

them: our doctor put the questions to me in English, and very good English too. I can't understand why he refused to speak English, for the adjutant interpreter spoke to us very freely in our own tongue. Of course it is useless trying to follow the German mind in all its ramblings and peculiarities.

At 10 o'clock I got some warm milk and some beef tea. Dinner was served at 12.30, and usually consisted of soup, potatoes, and meat (horse flesh), sometimes red cabbage in place of potatoes, and on Fridays fish instead of meat. Of course I didn't get that course; I was on a special diet: my dinner was made up of soup specially prepared to go through a tube,

At 3 o'clock I got some more milk, and at 5.30 soup. The men on ordinary diet had breakfast at 7.30, dinner at 12.30, and supper at 5.30; no extras were allowed unless the patient was on special diet. The food was wholly inadequate to sustain our men, and until our parcels from home began to come, the men were starving all the time. We came to Stuttgart on June 13; parcels began to come about September 1.

The German system of dressing is a very simple one—it consists of dry bandages and dry gauze. In cases of septic wounds, alcoholic water was poured over the mild cases, but the more serious cases were treated with a much stronger antiseptic. That comprised the treatment; no fomentations were used: the Germans seemed to have an antipathy to water. Men who couldn't move out of bed had to go for weeks without a bath. All treatment was local; there was only one part to a man's body, and that was where his wounds were. I lay for two days in mud before being picked up, consequently my head was coated with mud and blood. I had my first shampoo when I was able to do it myself, and that was in the end of July. My hair, which was always plentiful and in good condition, has suffered in consequence. Everybody speaks of the Anglo-Saxon's bath, but who ever heard of the German and his bath? In this case too his attentions are quite local.

At 4 o'clock the dressings were renewed, but only the serious cases were granted this privilege. After the first month this was stopped; we had to content ourselves with the morning dressing; some of the men were lucky if they had three dressings in the week. Clean shirts, clean towels, and handkerchiefs were supplied every week; beds may be freshened with clean sheets once a fortnight, more often they may not. The men who were allowed to be up were supplied with a hospital suit; it consisted of cotton trousers and a long coat—quite a comfortable outfit, but by no

means elegant. On good days such men were allowed to promenade in the garden from 2.30 till 5 P.M. Sometimes on hot days a number of patients were carried out in their beds to enjoy the benefit of a sun bath.

The adjutant of the medical staff was a very capable man and ran his hospital well, but he was the terror of the German orderlies and clerks. He was able to lash himself into a perfect fury on the spur of the moment at the slightest provocation; he would yell and foam at the mouth like a madman. All the staff had a holy dread of this stout little fire-eater. He was mainly responsible for the kindness shown to us after the first month. He watched us closely for a while and tested our men in various ways; when he saw that we were well-behaved, courteous, and clean, he wasn't slow to compliment us: after this the Engländer were the favourite prisoners. We didn't have any privileges, but we were treated with great respect by all the members of the staff, which was a very fine thing for us. We could write one postcard every week and one letter every alternate week.

Towards the end of July the doctors considered that my wound was clean and ready for the operation; so on August 1 this operation took place. I was taken into the theatre at 8 A.M. and didn't come out till after ten. I had only a local anaesthetic, so was able to see all that went on and to appreciate the delightful sensations of having my throat cut. The reason why such a big operation was performed with only a local anaesthetic was, as I was told afterwards, to avoid any possible reaction; such reaction would probably have nullified the work of the surgeon. My mouth was stitched right up save a small part sufficient to let a tube in. The surgeon worked very hard, and I think did his work neatly. He was assisted by other two doctors and several nurses. An old orderly, who was a good old soul and quite a favourite with us, held my hands all through the operation: I don't know how he managed to do it, for it must have been no light task to stand motionless for two hours. I was never more relieved at anything than I was when that was over; if ever I sweated, I did then.

A local anaesthetic may be all right when having a tooth extracted or a small abscess pierced, but it is all wrong on a big operation. Of course it is a little better than nothing, but not much. The surgeon was cutting flesh and scraping bone for fully an hour, the rest of the time was employed in stitching and bandaging. A long incision had to be made on my throat; the surgeon had completed this, and was preparing to spread open the wound when

he remembered he hadn't injected the anaesthetic. Although the pain was exquisite I had sense enough to lie perfectly still, otherwise serious consequences might have ensued. The surgeon was very sorry and apologised for his little slip; he told me not to worry, he would be more careful, and give me as little pain as possible.

I don't intend to say much more about my stay at Stuttgart; it was just six months of monotony: nothing very dramatic happened save three or four raids by our aeroplanes and my operation. I was very sick indeed for two weeks after my operation, but after that my progress was rapid and sure. There was quite a bit of excitement when our airmen dropped bombs a few hundred yards away from the hospital. It didn't frighten us much; in fact, we were secretly rejoicing at these exploits. We felt quite homesick for the firing-line when we again heard the familiar sound of bursting bombs, and gunfire from the anti-aircraft guns of the Germans. Two or three raids were quite without effect; I suspect they were merely reconnoitring parties sent over to get the lay of the land, for one raid brought off a few weeks before I left was conducted on a large scale and did considerable damage. A munition factory just outside Stuttgart was absolutely wrecked, and a large number of workers were killed and wounded; we heard from Frenchmen who were forced to work in this factory, and who were injured and brought to our hospital, that upwards of three hundred were killed and injured. The raid was made about mid-day, when the factory was working fully manned. Several German machines were brought down; all the Allies' machines got back safely. Stuttgart is fairly well protected by anti-aircraft guns, searchlights, and a squadron of aeroplanes and a few Zeppelins. We saw the aeroplanes and Zeppelins frequently flying over the city.

In September a Swiss Commission visited the hospital and recommended a number of us for an exchange. This exchange was to Switzerland. In November their recommendation was confirmed and all preparations were made to transport us, and on November 15 the lucky ones set out under an armed escort for Constance.

We left Stuttgart at 2.30 P.M. on the 15th and arrived at Constance about 11 P.M.

On the way we saw plenty of German soldiers at different stations with full pack entraining for the front; most of them seemed to have been on leave. The German soldier is very sloppy; in fact, many of them look more like tramps than soldiers. They

haven't the smart appearance of our men, nor do they look so intelligent. This is not a prejudiced opinion, but a fact which is apparent to everyone who has seen the Germans. They are certainly brave soldiers, but then so are our men: the German is an automaton, while our soldiers are full of dash and initiative and possess more staying power.

When we arrived at Constance we were taken to a large military barracks and housed in the hospital of that establishment. About a thousand British were there, including nearly one hundred officers, all waiting on the exchange. Owing to a hitch in the arrangements the medical examination was delayed for two weeks. In the interval we passed the time as well as we could reading and walking in the barrack square. We got fairly good food and could have a second helping for the asking: needless to say we were asking frequently.

At last the examination day came, and along with it a great excitement and the inevitable crop of rumours, which were as usual all wide of the mark.

There were five German doctors and two Swiss doctors conducting the examination. The work was gone through very rapidly; in two days everybody was examined, and in a week's time the place was cleared. A large number were rejected, but the majority got through and were despatched to various towns in Switzerland; six, including myself, were detailed for England.

We left Constance on November 27 for Aix-la-Chapelle via the Rhine Valley. At Aix-la-Chapelle we remained a week and met another medical board. Five of our six got through; the other boy, an Australian, was sent back to hospital for an operation. We left Aix-la-Chapelle on December 6 for England via Brussels, Antwerp, and the Hook of Holland. At the Hook we were taken on board the *St. Denis* hospital ship, arriving in London on the evening of December 9 after a rather stormy voyage. Not till we arrived in London could we feel that we had really left Germany and were free men once more. About eighty-four of us were exchanged; some were very badly battered, but by the look on each face as we sat in the train bound for London and saw ladies handing round tea and cakes, one would almost think we were returning from a picnic which everyone had enjoyed. We had been on a picnic all right, but it was organised by the minister of evil himself.

I have finished now, and after a final operation my dreams of a whole jaw will be realised.

ALEX. MILLAR ALLAN.

THE ORDERLY ROOM.

TIMOTHY FANE swung through the barrack gate on his way to the station with a marvellous sense of buoyancy and release. The pass in his pocket stated that No. 4142, Pte. Fane, had leave to be absent from his quarters from 1 P.M., November 24, till tattoo, November 25; and whole tracts of his brain that had lain fallow for three months were blossoming as he went. When war broke out he had been for two years a civil servant in one of the dulllest and most overstaffed of Government offices. They had refused to let him go on the plea of excessive work; so, having some small private means of his own, he had resigned his job and enlisted. He had regretted this decision only at the rarest moments; but that did not prevent him from experiencing an extreme elation at the prospect of even two days' liberation from barracks. He hummed, as he crossed the common, a little setting he had made up to the old nursery rhyme—

'How many miles to Babylon?
Three score and ten.
Shall I get there by candle-light?
Yes, and back again.'

He hadn't made any definite plans. He hoped to be in London in time to change and get tea at the Club, and there was a little business to be settled. He longed to see the London shops again; and above all, he wanted to see Rosalind. But for some reason she had not answered his letter, and he had been careful not to book up his time until he knew when she could meet him.

At the station he bought a *Tatler*, but he looked out of the window most of the way; and it was lying open, but still for the most part unread, upon his knees, when the train plunged into the series of tunnels which lead to London, and was gliding, almost before he realised where he was, along the platform of Liverpool Street. He jumped out, took a taxi, and drove to Lincoln's Inn. Sitting back loosely in a corner of the cab, he watched with increasing delight the crowds moving slowly past the Christmas shop windows. Placards announcing another great Russian victory flared at every street corner; and he realised for the first time how small a part the war had really played in his life during the last three months.

Once in his rooms, he looked eagerly for Rosalind's handwriting, and, with a certain sense of unquietness, failed to find it. He threw off his uniform into a heap in the corner, and plunged luxuriously into a hot bath. Drying leisurely in front of the fire, he dressed himself in plain clothes again with a delightful sense of airiness and freedom, and went down to his Club. There he ordered tea and hot toast, and ran upstairs to the upper smoking-room. Four middle-aged men were playing bridge in one corner, while three others, assisted by cigars, were standing in front of the fire, discussing the passage of the Russians through England and capping each other's stories of people who had seen them. It pleased him at any rate to fancy that they looked at him as on one who was not taking his fair share in national events ; and he stayed on in the Club, lazy and contented, till dinner-time, writing letters and reading the papers. In the old days he had used it very little, occasionally taking a friend there to lunch but in general avoiding its ponderous quietness. To-day its very silence and dullness had a certain appeal for him, long confined as he had been to the ill-lit publicity of a barrack room.

He slept in his rooms, lying idly in bed the next morning till after nine o'clock. There was still no letter from Rosalind, and he sent her a wire, saying that he would come down about three on the chance of finding her. In the course of the morning he visited his solicitors, and fixed up his will ; and then he strolled down Regent Street and Bond Street, amusing himself with the shop windows and the people on the pavement till it was time to lunch with his grandmother in Eaton Square. He found her full of dark and ill-supported stories of regiments that had run away, Dreadnoughts that had been blown up, members of the baronetage that had been shot as spies, members of the peerage that were interned in the Tower. Timothy escaped from her and from the West End with relief, taking an eastward-bound train at Victoria. He got out at Stepney Green, and was soon in the Square where Rosalind lived. It was full, as usual, of Jewish children playing among the dead leaves that the wind had gathered into drifts. Of old he had sometimes stopped to talk to them and play with them ; but to-day he walked straight through the garden and stopped before a house at the farther end of the square.

'Well, Mrs. Robins, how are you ?' he asked cheerfully, as a meagre woman in curling-papers answered his knock upon the door.

'Nicely, thank you, sir,' the woman answered, looking at him,

he thought, with a certain strangeness. 'I hope you're the same, sir,' she added rather hurriedly, as though recollecting suddenly the amenities due from her.

'Oh, splendid, thanks. What about Miss Ogilvie? Is she at home?'

'No, sir,' said the woman, looking at him uneasily, as though wondering how much he knew. 'She went away last night, sir. She wrote to you before she went, but I just see'd the letter not five minutes ago still lying on her table. I expect as how she forgot to post it.'

'Oh,' said Timothy, the fear of something unknown rising in him. 'Where did she go to, do you know?'

'She went off in a great hurry, sir. A gentleman came and picked her up in a taxicab about nine o'clock last night. I believe, sir,' she said uneasily, swaying from one foot to the other and shifting her eyes from his, 'they was going to get married.'

Timothy's mind rocked like a ship that suddenly finds herself in the breakers. But the woman's presence helped him to keep the rudder firm for a few moments longer.

'Mrs. Robins, I've got an hour or two to wait before I catch a train. Do you mind if I go and sit up in Miss Ogilvie's rooms for a bit? I'm sure she'd let me, wouldn't she?'

Mrs. Robins, glad to be released from a situation which she felt to be too hard for her, at once agreed.

'Why, sir, of course, and welcome,' she said, and led the way busily upstairs, holding up her dingy dress on either side.

She opened the door at the top of the first flight of stairs and, preceding him into the sitting-room, cleared and drew up an arm-chair for him.

'That's the letter I was meaning, sir. I'm glad you've come, for I was wondering whether to post it or not,' and she pointed out a stamped envelope on the table addressed to himself.

She pretended to be tidying up as he took the letter, her curiosity bidding her remain so long as she was not called upon to play a prominent part in what she suspected to be a disaster.

'Never mind about that, Mrs. Robins,' he said. 'I'm afraid it'll be a long job getting all those things straight,' and he indicated with a nod the heap of books and other belongings that littered the writing-table and the chairs. 'I should leave it till the morning.'

Half reluctant to miss the next incident in these strange events, half glad to avoid further questions, Mrs. Robins withdrew, giving

an air of spontaneity to her retreat by picking up and taking with her a pair of Rosalind's shoes to clean.

As the door closed, Timothy Fane pulled her letter open with a jerk of his forefinger and read :

'I'm just off to marry Basil, who's back from the Front on a week's leave. I know you'll think me a perfect beast not to have told you about it before ; but I only knew myself three days ago, and, anyhow, you've got to forgive me.

'Tim, dear, you always understood me so well, and I know you'll understand this. I'll write to you as soon as I get a moment.

'ROSALIND.'

The next hour, the strangest of all his life, he could never afterwards forget and never clearly recall. He remembered chiefly roaming up and down the little room, torn with feelings for which he could find no outlet in action. He was hurt, bitterly hurt, by the casualness of her note. He was angry with her, but much more angry with Basil Morton for what they had done. Above all he was devoured by wolfish jealousy. It tortured him, mind and body.

He remembered her first as a tall, slim girl in a starry dress of blue and silver, swaying suddenly into his view at a dance and instantly dominating the room. He had stood in a corner and watched her, admiring the clean curves of her hair, caught back by a single band, and the great blue tourmaline at her throat, a noble ornament that suited, he told himself, her fine barbaric beauty. A few weeks later he had found himself by chance sitting next to her at dinner. She had suddenly turned from her other neighbour and spoken to him.

'We're talking about the world, Mr. Fane ; what would you alter first in it, if you had the chance ? ' she had said gaily, looking him straight in the eyes. And he had caught her mood and answered her, with just the shade of seriousness that had underlain her own gaiety,

'The hearts of men and the minds of women, Miss Ogilvie.'

'Oh, but this is a wizard,' she had cried ; 'Mr. Fane, I shall love you.'

Thence they had passed on to the rattle, the quick give and take of whole-hearted conversation. She had led the talk, her ideas coming to him, he had thought at the time, like catches in the slips at cricket. And he prided himself that he had fielded every one of them and had hurled them back with something of his own in the

throw, that had enabled him to snatch her promise, before the ladies broke away from the table, that some day she would come to tea with him.

Thereafter he had met her sometimes at dances, generally without much satisfaction. He would come in tired after his work, dispirited with weariness; and she in her magnificence would seem so far removed from his dull, mortal humour. Once or twice their moods had harmonised. There had been a dance on a close July night, at which she had insisted on walking about the streets instead of dancing; and, springing suddenly from him as they passed a smart, newly painted house, she had run up the front door steps and broken off three magnificent sprays of scarlet geranium from one of its window-boxes. These she had pinned into her white dress, and 'Flowers from Fairyland,' she had said, as they came back into the lighted supper-room, turning to show him how fine a decoration they made; and presently had raised her glass to the health of the gardener who grew them, and the conversion of the rich man whose geraniums they were.

Soon after that she had broken away from her people, being tired, she explained to him, of living up to the theory that she had only to show herself on their doorstep to make her selection among the eligible crowned heads of Europe. They had refused to let her become a professional singer, and she was determined to sing, having the makings, she was told, of a fine contralto voice. And so, when an aunt left her a legacy, she broke away from home and went off to live in the East End and started to work hard at her singing. He had come to see more of her then. They had explored London together of an evening in perfect companionship and freedom. If the streets were dull, they told each other stories to make up for it; and they generally ended with supper in his rooms or in hers. He had realised all the time that a crisis in their relations must come sooner or later. But she had taken everything for granted, never looking beyond the day, either forward to anticipate or backward to regret. Physical beauty always had a great effect on her. She would stop suddenly in the street to watch a man or a woman who attracted her; and when first she had met Basil Morton in his rooms, she had admired him excessively. 'Oh, who's that man with the golden head?' she had asked Timothy after Basil had left the room. 'You know, some day I shall run away with a glorious head like that, and leave you all alone to tell stories to yourself. Would you like that,

Tim ? ' she had said, peeping round the door at him as she went out.

The crisis had come, one splendid spring morning. She was living in a cottage in Surrey then, and he had come down by an early train and walked out half way from the station to meet her. He had got to their meeting-place first, and had sat down on a sandy bank at the edge of a pine wood to wait for her. Then suddenly she had come into sight, round a turn in the road, a swaying figure in a light grey dress with a crimson scarf about her hair and throat, a grey figure that waved to him as she caught sight of him and then broke into a run that brought her panting up to where he stood waiting. ' Oh, Tim, I'm so glad to see you,' she had said. And she had led him off, through pine woods, across streams and over rolling sandy ridges, to a little grassy hollow in the heather. And there they had sat down side by side, and talked about life and about herself.

' Oh, I'm so glad to have you here, and I'm so glad to have got away from home,' she had said, laughing and stretching out her arms to the heather and the sunlight. ' You can't imagine what it's like to me to be free. Don't you think it's an awful shame, Tim, the way they bring up girls in our class ? There's nothing for them to do at home, and they aren't allowed to do anything outside. Sometimes when I felt desperate I used to set to work and scrub the passages for very boredom. And then all the servants said they hated to see me do it, and mother told me I had the soul of a housemaid. How I used to envy the girls I saw in the streets, going about happily together or spending the evening with their young men ! Everything at home was so half-hearted ; one wasn't allowed to throw oneself into anything. If one got keen about something, it always had to be postponed to calls and lunches and tea-parties, till it died a natural death. One could hardly speak to a man except at dances ; and then one was just like an animal brought to market, with the men dropping in casually, as they felt inclined, to inspect one, and the chaperons round the wall waiting to take one home again. I wished often that it *was* a market. I'd far sooner have been taken out frankly with a lot of other girls into a regular market, where no one pretended that it was anything else, and no one attempted to disguise what was happening with flowers and champagne and expensive dresses. But now I'm free of all that—free, free, free ! ' And with that cry she had suddenly put her arm round his neck and had drawn his head towards her and kissed him ; and then

had leapt to her feet and sprung off across the heather like a deer, looking round just once to provoke him into pursuit of her.

He had followed her, and had come upon her round the corner of a birch copse, lying in long grass, breathless and laughing.

'Rosalind,' he had cried out, serious and laughing at once, 'you must marry me ; really, dear, you must.'

'Oh Timothy, Timothy,' she had said, 'you mustn't talk about being married in a fairy wood like this. And I *will* be allowed to put my arm round your neck—yes, and to kiss you too, Tim—without your being obliged to propose to me. No, I don't think I'll ever marry you, and I don't think I'll ever marry anyone else. But we'll talk it all out some night in London, when we've nothing better to talk about. But now—but now we're going to explore this magic wood.' And with a feigned air of mystery she had led the way like a scout on the trail into the heart of the birches.

Later on that summer he had tried one evening in his rooms to start the promised argument. But first she had forgotten all about it, and then she had remembered, but laughed at him and told him she wanted to sing and to be free, and that, if she married him, she would certainly not be free and therefore would not be able to sing. She cared for nobody, she said, but she wanted to be free to care for anybody she met and liked the looks of. And in any case she didn't know in the least yet what she was made of, and wasn't ready to think of marrying. And with that she had caught up an armful of poppies from his table and wrapped their stalks in a black scarf she was wearing, and so run away, with a gesture that had haunted him through the wakeful hours of that September night.

It must have been the war that had brought her so suddenly to destruction. He knew from his own observations in London during the fortnight after it broke out what a strangely moving effect it had had upon women—the sort of women one saw every day in the streets. But Rosalind ? He began to search his memory of her, to review her speech and her actions, if haply he could discover what spring it was in her nature that had now so swiftly, so irretrievably betrayed her.

What an incarnation of life she was, with her vivid eager beauty and her deep, resonant voice ! A creature of changing moods, that each in turn absorbed her and washed out, like an incoming tide, all traces of its predecessors ; of sudden imaginings that must come instantly to action or be forgotten ; of unforeseen and delightful doings that by their very unexpectedness won the hearts of men and

women ; of a love of children and of stories, and of a direct and imaginative speech that blew sparks from the dullest object. Sometimes she would be devoured by evil moods—possessed by bogies, he used to tell her—when she would hate the present and be afraid of the future. At such moments she would strike at whatever came first to her hand, wounding by quick and bitter speech more often her friends than her enemies. But these were brief-lived moods that passed, sometimes by way of penitence, but more often back through complete unconsciousness and oblivion to a full-hearted affection for those who loved her.

The unexpectedness of her ways, it was, that had first appealed to him, and satisfied the instinct for fantasy and adventure that his work had signally failed to employ. All his desire to play with life and try experiments with it and tell stories about it had gone out to meet the imagination in her, the swift variety of her thoughts and moods. There were a dozen natures brimming in her, he used to think, and each one ready to pour over into quick, glancing life. Surely she was a being made to move the hearts of men !

He had grown so accustomed to think of her as his, or at least as nobody else's. And yet he had known that other men would fall in love with her, that she would be frank and free with them as she had been frank and free with him ; that she would enjoy their admiration of her provided they were cheerful, and would mock at them if they began to mope and make themselves miserable on her account.

That he had expected and that he could have endured. But this that had happened struck not only at his personal pride but at his idea of her. He had been at school and at college with Basil Morton ; and he had consistently beaten him. He had been cleverer than he was ; he had been better at games than he ; and among men he had always been the better liked. And now Rosalind of all women had fallen a victim to this commonplace—this second-rate, unimaginative, good-looking man. No doubt Basil felt her beauty, but how would he be able to understand her moods and her mind, her humour and fantasticalness ? His narrow, meagre spirit would be soured by her evil moods, instead of quickening to coax away her terrors, her bogies, even her cruelties. He would be like a blind man walking beside her through life—self-satisfied, probably, and happy enough, but debarred for ever by his own limitations from realising all that he was spoiling, from knowing all that he missed.

And he himself. What could he have done differently that might have won her? If he had been bolder with her, more decided, more tyrannical even, would he have captured her? But then it wasn't his way to be tyrannical. Besides, it was hateful that anyone should have captured her at all. She was made to be a comrade of men, to meet them freely and on equal terms, not to be lured, ensnared, captured.

He pictured their next meeting—Basil stupid, hearty and uncomprehending; he himself shy and uncertain of everything. How would she carry it off? Would she, too, be reserved and diffident, or would she leap at him with all the frankness of their old companionship, and show him that her spirit was still free and untrapped? Perhaps she would get tired of Basil altogether—bored with his good looks and his dullness! Mightn't she come stealing to his door one evening and ask to be allowed in to supper? The thought of that possibility roused his blood again. He could hear her knocking upon the door, could see her merry face peeping round it, her fine delicate body slipping into the room. She would come and sit on the arm of his chair and ask him to forgive her and treat her just as of old. And before he had time to recover from his surprise and make up his mind what to do, she would be drawing the curtains and laying the supper and probably dancing a story on the hearthrug to please him. He knew well that he'd be absurdly joyful when she came, that he'd forgive her and enter into the spirit of it all. He felt almost certain, too, that she'd come just as he had imagined. And then, with a sudden chill, he remembered that if she came, he wouldn't be there, but would be sitting on his bed in some hideous, colourless barrack room, with the bugles and the crunching of the sentry's feet upon the gravel, and the noise of his fellows gambling at the table.

He sat there till long after dark, till he could see little but the outline of the tree-tops in front of him, and the grey sky overhead. He was utterly weary now. He walked round the room, fingering almost mechanically some of Rosalind's belongings, and, picking up the pair of earrings he had given her, he slipped them into his pocket, vowing she should have them back when she came to fetch them. Then he opened the door, went heavily downstairs and let himself out into the street.

Of the rest of that night, and of the day which followed it, and of the night which followed that again, he had afterwards only the vaguest recollection. In a dim welter of memory there stood out

an impression of the brilliantly lighted doorways of picture palaces, of trams sailing along a darkened Embankment, of the Houses of Parliament, with a light still burning above Big Ben. It seemed to him that he had wandered about a common—Wimbledon Common, he supposed—through hours of darkness breaking into wan daylight, fancying that he was on a route march and must not fall out without permission from a sergeant whom he could never quite catch up. Some time in the course of the night he must have travelled in a motor 'bus, for he remembered watching the shadows of the rain-drops on the window chase across the backs of his fellow-passengers as the omnibus scudded past the darkened lamps. Somehow, too, he must have got back to his rooms; for he remembered sleeping on his bed there, restlessly and brokenly, putting on his uniform again, and walking through London streets once more in the early hours of a drizzling morning, feverish and utterly worn out.

At the barrack gate he fumbled silently for his pass, had a brief interview with the sergeant on gate-duty, and was told to empty his pockets. As he did this, Rosalind's blue and silver earrings fell out upon the table, and the sergeant grunted. Then he was hurried into the bare and gloomy guard detention room, where he lay on a mattress among six other unfortunates till the doctor had passed him as fit for punishment.

Commanding Officer's orders that day were left over till after four o'clock; and it was getting dark before he was marched out under escort of two men of the guard and formed up outside the orderly room in a line with several witnesses and another man from his company. They stood there at ease under the window for nearly half an hour, listening to the rainwater dripping from a gutter on the opposite side of the road. Then the door opened, a file of men came tumbling out, a voice inside called 'Next,' and the sergeant shouted 'Number 3 Company, 'tention. Left wheel, quick march. Right wheel. Halt-t-t. Right turn.'

The door shut behind the party; and he found himself standing before a small table, at which a man whom he identified uncertainly as the commanding officer was sitting on the adjutant's right. The sergeant-in-waiting of his company, who led the file, read out the business.

'No. 3 Company, sir. One man dismissed detention. One man Guard Report.'

The battalion sergeant-major rapped out the name of the man released from detention: 'O'Brien.'

A pause ; then, as O'Brien made no motion, ' O'Brien, pace forward. Look t' yer front.'

O'Brien took a short pace forward and clicked his heels together.

' This man, sir,' said the sergeant-major, ' had fourteen days' detention ; drunk and resisting escort.'

The commanding officer looked vaguely up from his papers, said ' All right,' and again looked down.

' Fall in,' snapped the sergeant-major, and referred the colonel to the Guard Report.

' Fane,' called the colonel, looking up at the line in front of him as he spoke.

Timothy Fane took the same short pace to his front, a little wearily as compared with the man who saw the prospect of many drinks in front of him after fourteen days in the cells. He looked fixedly over the colonel's head at an official diagram on the wall, illustrating the differences between English and German airships. The colonel looked down again to the Guard Report and read out the charge :

' Absent from 10 P.M. November 25 to 6.20 A.M. November 28 : fifty-six hours and twenty minutes. Sergeant Evans.'

The sergeant sprang to his front.

' Sir, I was sergeant-in-waiting, Number 3 Company, on the night in question. I called the roll at tattoo. The accused did not answer his name.'

He stepped back.

' Sergeant Temple,' read out the commanding officer.

' Sir, I was sergeant of the barrack guard on November 28. The accused returned to barracks at 6.20 A.M. I confined him in the usual manner.'

' Was he clean and sober ? ' asked the colonel.

' Sir, he was not drunk ; he had been drinking. He was fairly clean.'

' Anything to say ? ' said the colonel to the accused.

Timothy Fane knew himself in a world where Rosalinds didn't count. ' Nothing, sir,' he said.

The colonel paused for a moment's consideration. Then, ' You men are much too casual,' he said. ' I give you special privileges and you abuse them ; and not only that, but you make it very difficult for me to grant similar privileges to other men. Is this man a recruit, Sergeant-major ? '

' A young soldier, sir. He came on from the dépôt about

a month ago. He's a great disappointment to me, this man, sir,' said the sergeant-major, speaking deliberately and looking at Timothy Fane. 'I was just going to recommend you to give him a stripe. He's a well-educated man, sir, and might have done very well. But a man who behaves like this is no use to me, sir—no use at all.'

The colonel fingered his pen and bent over the Guard Report.

'Well, if you will stay away without leave, you must pay the usual penalty. Seventy-two hours' detention.'

'And lose three days' pay,' prompted the adjutant.

'And lose three days' pay by Royal Warrant,' resumed the colonel.

'Fall in,' shouted the sergeant-major. 'Right turn. Quick march.'

Witnesses and accused, the escort, the man released from detention and the company sergeant-in-waiting passed out of the room together, lifting their knees in a pace that was a cross between a double and a quick march.

'Nothing else for the commanding officer, sir,' said the sergeant-major, and saluted.

Outside, as Timothy was marched back under escort, it was quite dark. The stars were shining mirrored in the puddles which the rain had left about the barrack yard, and he had just time to feel a touch of comfort in their reflection, a link with a wider world which somehow understood things better, when the sergeant told him sharply to hold his head up, and they were back in the guard room again. He had a glimpse of a private soldier examining Rosalind's blue and silver earrings as they lay on the window-sill. Then the door slammed behind him, and he was left to wait for the hour of transfer to the cells.

S. G. TALLENTS.

THE ANTI-BRITISH TRADITION IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

PRIOR to the recent declaration of war by the United States, the attitude of its various sections towards the belligerent nations was extremely interesting to some of us here who are accustomed to think of that country as possessed of a past, beyond say living memory, and not merely of that present and future potency in which the world is naturally much concerned. From time to time leading newspapers dispatched commissioners to feel the pulse of opinion in the South, i.e. the old Southern States (with its sub-section the South-West), the Middle and Far West, and the Pacific Slope. The East, outside its ill-digested *hyphenates* Irish and German, had been so consistently pro-Ally that no such diagnosis seemed necessary. The Middle and Far West, with their large foreign element, and remoter situation, had their obvious difficulties. Their American-born population, too, was derived from all parts of the Union: there was no tradition and history behind these States. It was the old South, however, that interested me by far the most, not merely because I knew it at a more characteristic and representative period, but from the fact that it is still fairly homogeneous, for the negro doesn't count. British blood enormously preponderates, in spite of much rapid development in certain towns and patches, and a moderate commercial influx of Northerners and *hyphenates*. Moreover its people were, and to judge by its current literature still are, more prone than other Americans to lay particular stress on their unadulterated English origin, and among the better sort to profess, on this account, a certain kin-feeling for such Englishmen as may be thrown into their company, a little more pronounced than that expressed by the less demonstrative but similarly derived New Englander. This has been a notable Southern characteristic since living memory. Indeed I fancy a vague idea prevails even now in this country, as it prevailed through all the old days, though constantly refuted by fact, that the Virginians at any rate would be the last to fall out with a motherland so constantly and so warmly invoked by the fireside. And Virginia—though, for reasons obvious and other-

wise, now reduced to insignificance amid the vast confederacy of States old and new—is pre-eminently the typical Southern State from a retrospective point of view; the oldest, the largest, the most powerful, the most respected, the most interesting in every way of the Southern group. We are not concerned here with the points that differentiate one Southern State from another. In most things that matter they have seen eye to eye, have followed the same domestic and political ideals, and on the common basis of generations of negro slavery have acquired a sort of sectional freemasonry from Maryland to Georgia. Virginia will stand more than adequately for the South as regards anything I have to say here in an attempt to show the rather paradoxical attitude towards the Mother Country observed for all time, as time counts, in America. The impelling cause of these pages may seem trifling enough, for it is merely the report of these journalistic analysts that they found in Virginia and the South certain traces of anti-British feeling, wholly unconcerned with injurious blockade measures and the like. They didn't attempt to account for them. Clever young men from Boston or New York know very little now about the old-time Southern mind and care less. Pro-German, of course, no element in the old South could possibly be. It revealed, said they, either the indifference of a characteristic provincial aloofness, or pro-Ally sentiments mainly inspired by sympathy, not so much for the Mother Country as for France, of whose people and all concerning them no branch of the Anglo-Saxon stock is probably quite so ignorant as Virginia and her neighbours. Above all, as before stated, they found 'a certain unaccountable anti-British sentiment,' slightly obstructing that forward movement which most Northerners, impatient of the then American attitude, desired.

For myself, though cut off from the South for five and twenty years save by correspondence, I recognised the old, old note at once—a sort of inherited instinct, quite illogical and always at variance with what may be termed the prevalent family feeling. I really did think, however, it was dead by this time! But then I thought the same at the Venezuela crisis and was frankly astonished to find friends and acquaintances, though quite ignorant of the intricacies of the case, stoutly backing a national government which they had been abusing day in and day out ever since the Civil War, in its quarrel with the country which was the constant theme of their half-regretful admiration. A fine example, it may

be suggested, of recovered patriotism! That is as may be. But in a dozen years of intimate association with Virginians, in their own homes, when their feelings on all these matters had cause for constant expression, I scarcely ever heard a 'nationally' patriotic note. 'I am a Virginian, not an American,' expressed the almost universal sentiment. This, of course, was only natural and due to the old sectional antipathy between North and South, infinitely embittered by recent strife, defeat and loss. So long as no political friction was astir, there was no country, outside their own section, like England, and no people, in their opinion, so akin to themselves as the English. This applies more especially to the educated class, but even among the 'plain people,' the yeoman farmers, one frequently heard similar utterances, after the manner of an accepted hereditary faith. For though the former had a certain book knowledge of social England from standard fiction and other sources, the latter had no conception at all of English life. A personal acquaintance with their Motherland was practically non-existent among the generation of Southerners, certainly of Virginians, who fought the Civil War; and this severance of relations went a very long way back into colonial times. The tradition, however, that they had preserved a larger share of English customs and ideas than the Northern provinces was universal, and always alluded to in terms of self-complacency. There was undoubtedly a half-truth in this. Probably in colonial times it would have been a whole truth, but a further century of isolation and negro slavery, helped by a quasi-democratic flavour introduced by the Revolution, drew the South farther away from English ideals, while the always democratic but generally better educated Northerners lost little by Independence of the particular English characteristics which had clung to them.

They had lived and moved under expanding conditions and in closer touch with the outside world. The Virginian, though retaining many of his old English traits, had developed others by no means so picturesque.

Whether this pride of English origin and traditions was a feature of Southern social life in the eighteenth century, the few English travellers who have left interesting impressions of it do not tell us. But since that time at any rate, and in apparent conflict with this abstract Anglophilism, there has existed a curious undercurrent of political hostility to the Mother Country, incompatible with either sense or logic, and of a different quality from those international

asperities which from time to time and for some particular reason have found expression in the North—a sort of inheritance and tradition from the past, kept in a cupboard like a Revolutionary great-grandfather's musket, to be produced in any international 'conversation' with that Mother Country so frequently and affectionately invoked in normal moments. How partial this hardy relic of ancient feuds may now be I know not, but it survives, strange as this may seem among a purely British stock, even under the unprecedented conditions of the present war, and that is enough. It is a matter of no practical importance in any case, and America's participation will perhaps extinguish its last sparks. It survived the rather misplaced and uninstructed sympathy of our well-to-do classes with the South in the Civil War, which was appreciated by every Southerner I knew, though naturally enough resented by the North, who have long ago forgotten their rather justifiable grievance.

I wonder how many CORNHILL readers are aware that the Virginians put up the first and only serious revolt against the Crown prior to the War of Independence? This was in 1676 and is familiar in American history as *Bacon's Rebellion*. It sprang out of a rather trifling dispute about an Indian expedition with Sir William Berkeley, who was Governor of Virginia for about thirty years, and had hitherto been popular. Bacon, the leader, was an English gentleman and landowner. A majority of the planting interest followed him, and several thousand men took the field in arms. There was little serious fighting, but the disturbance lasted for some months, and the House of Assembly was in sympathy with the rebels. Berkeley was supported by his council, or Upper House, a body drawn from a few leading families who lived in social touch with the little capital at Jamestown—the nucleus of a family ring that, with extensions, virtually governed Virginia through the whole colonial period. The Government party succeeded in suppressing the revolt more by the disintegration of the rebellious elements than by its own exertions. Troops came out eventually from England, the first ever sent to the North American colonies, and stiffened the arm of the Governor, who punished the leading rebels with a severity which astonished and shocked Virginia, and made his name odious in colonial annals. Gallows were erected in various counties from which justices of the peace and militia colonels were swung with almost as little ceremony as if they had been plantation negroes. Berkeley was recalled and snubbed for his pains. 'The old fool has hung up more men in that naked

country,' said Charles II., 'than I have punished for the murder of my father.'

However, the quarrel in Virginia, aggravated by a temporary pressure of the Navigation Laws on the price of tobacco and some preposterous grants of land to Court favourites by Charles II., soon blew over. But it showed that the Anglican Monarchists of the South, though wedded to English ways and a quasi-aristocratic system, were at least as jealous of viceregal interference as the Puritan Republicans of New England.¹ Scarce thirty years, too, had passed since so many Royalist refugees of all sorts had come into the colony as appreciably to stimulate its development and influence its life. Virginia, with which Maryland may be coupled, developed along peculiar lines. North Carolina, like the others a temperate climate, followed them, but owing to causes here irrelevant became, as it has ever remained, a ruder, more democratic, less civilised replica of its neighbours. South Carolina, semi-tropical, with an important seaport capital at Charleston, approached more nearly the West Indian model.

After the pioneering struggles were over, the physical conditions of Virginia drew such settlers as through sagacity, industry, or interest in land patents had come out on top, towards that expansive country life which has always had attractions for Englishmen. Tobacco was the one marketable crop, and as East Virginia abounded in tidal rivers, the leading planters spread themselves along their banks with ample forest lands attached to each estate for present and future use in raising grain and rearing stock. There were no towns or local markets to speak of. Vessels from England took the tobacco of each estate from its own wharf to the commission merchant in London or Bristol, who purchased and shipped back such manufactured articles as the planter required. Counties were formed, with justices, courts and county offices on English lines, fresh ones being created as the tide of settlement pressed inland. The Church of England was established and dissent forbidden under penalties. There was nothing specially 'aristocratic' about the early Virginia planters, such as Southern and American literature from pure sentiment is given to representing. Many of them, as in every English colony for all time, were respectably connected

¹ The Council of Trade and Plantations in Charles the Second's reign went actively into relations with the colonies. They sent Commissioners to Massachusetts who reported a state of tension and an inclination to resent any interference from the Home Government, and actually foretold a quite possible severance from the Mother Country should the opportunity arise; an attitude, however, no doubt modified by the English Revolution of 1688.

at home; others who became leaders were of plain extraction. But the point is that large farming fostered by imported convict or indentured labour and then by African slavery produced, as in the West Indies, a quasi aristocracy, based on land. In tropical and semi-tropical countries this system was inevitable. But in Virginia black labour was not climatically necessary. It was the desire for acquiring large tracts, stimulated by the abounding transport facilities, that raised the cry for imported labour. Hence the social cleavages into which the colony fell. For, unlike the West Indies, there was ample room for a large yeoman class of freeholders, with no pretension to gentility or education, working on a smaller scale, either manually or with slave labour, but frequently rising into the class above. Through the seventeenth century emigration to Virginia and her neighbours was brisk. It attracted the normal Englishman of adventurous or ambitious temperament as well as the waster and the unfortunate. Moreover, gentlemen's sons, with enough means to buy land and slaves, found themselves socially comfortable, while another sort found similar opportunities in their various degrees. Local administration was good, and the franchise fairly liberal, but all the offices and most of the power were in the hands of the upper class, and naturally so since it possessed all the available legal knowledge and education. It was, in truth, all very English, with the inevitable differences due to climate, circumstances and the extreme isolation of plantation life, which last arose from the wide acreage, not merely of tilled lands but of uncleared forest. Isolation, however, stimulates sociability, and no people in the world, till their circumstances altered within easy memory, were more sociable, hospitable and genial than the Virginians. The land was pretty good, the climate on the whole kindly, while game and fish abounded. Life was generally happy, and the people grew greatly attached to their country. They were already farming it abominably, exhausting their lands with repeated crops of tobacco and maize, a method continued under the blighting system of slavery right up till the Civil War (1861-5), when the face of Virginia from the mountains to the sea presented, as it still presents with few exceptions, a piteous agricultural spectacle.¹

¹ At the Civil War (1861-5), in fifty (speaking broadly) of the sixty counties between the mountains and the sea, a third part approximately of every farm was 'old field,' i.e. land abandoned, as absolutely sterile, to briars, sedge, scrub pines, or storm-rent gullies, while one half of the remainder produced about a third of the grain per acre averaged in normal countries. The balance, including

At Bacon's Rebellion England was still 'home.' Few of the second or third generation Virginians knew it, but family ties with English relatives were not quite snapped, while probably a third of the then population had been born and reared in the 'old country,' as the phrase had and still has it. By 1700 emigration had almost ceased. But with increasing African slavery in the east and the pushing of the surplus whites, greatly stimulated by such a system, westward over fresh lands towards the Alleghanies, the colony progressed through its own increase, while England, save as a market, faded further away. A few sons of leading families went over to Eton or Westminster, but a local college, 'William and Mary,' still extant, now educated the better class youth at home, while the masses had almost no education at all. When the French wars in the mid-eighteenth century brought the colonists again into closer touch with the Crown and the Mother Country, Virginia contained about 300,000 whites, with over half that number of slaves. The few 'managing' families, periodically reinforced, were still in the saddle, though, needless to say, the velvet glove was mainly used in handling such a scattered community of independent freeholders of all degrees. As for the Governor, he could always be kept in order by a refusal to vote his salary! In the newer western counties nonconformist and democratic ideas arose, and an opposition was growing up in the House of Assembly to the conservative and class ideas of the old counties. Behind these western counties again, right on the dangerous Indian frontier, and the slopes of the Alleghanies, a type of emigrant, strange altogether to Virginia, had been steadily establishing himself, mostly by way of Pennsylvania, since early in the eighteenth century. These were the Ulster Presbyterians, driven in thousands from Ireland by the fatuous policy of both Parliaments. Quite out of sympathy with Virginian ideas of any kind, and isolated by situation, they remained for long a people to themselves—in the Province but not of it—till the ever-moving tide of Anglo-Virginian settlement reached their blood-stained frontier country and brought them within the colonial administration. Even to this day the

alluvial valley lands, might show a normal yield. Tobacco is an intensive crop, covering a small area and heavily fertilised. The *average* freehold value of a farm was £3 to £6 an acre—about a third of that then prevailing in E. Pennsylvania—a contrast greatly accentuated after the war, and only in parts modified even to-day. Slavery in the wrong place was mainly responsible for this reckless treatment of a beautiful but only partially fertile country. But the later Virginians had no responsibility for slavery. That belonged to their ancestors and the British slave traders. Virginia was intended for a 'white man's' country.

'Scotch Irish' hold their own, and have made the most physically beautiful portion of the State a contrast to the rest for its relative thrift, good farming, and incidentally its staunch Presbyterianism.

When in 1754 it became evident that there was to be a critical struggle between England and France for supremacy in North America, or, in other words, whether or no the English colonies were to be cut off from all Western expansion, if nothing worse, Virginia, more directly threatened and more vitally interested than perhaps any, was called upon to bestir herself for her own sake and the Empire's. She was then the strongest of the American colonies and still regarded as the most typically English of all—and contained a limited gentry class, a numerous, ill-educated yeomanry living in simple comfort and mostly freed by slave labour from the hard manual grind of the average Northern farmer, and lastly a brutalised, degraded lower class. But when war broke out, the response of Virginia, like that of Maryland (equally English), was meagre enough, and in the two or three battalions she did raise her leading class was quite inadequately represented. Virginia indeed sat tight on her plantations, even for the two years after Braddock's defeat, when her Scotch-Irish frontiers were raided bare by the savages of the Franco-Indian alliance. Young Washington, then struggling with a half-hearted, ill-officered regiment of militia to alleviate the horrors of the stampede, has left a sufficiently scathing indictment of his fellow-colonists in their sheltered country east of the mountains. Massachusetts and Connecticut supported the war to the limit of their capacities, with money, supplies, and nearly 20,000 men, most of whom could ill be spared from plough and workshop.

Virginia and Maryland—the Carolinas were less involved—though fully alive to their future political and economic interests in the trans-Alleghany country, coveted by the French, showed as much apathy in their assertion as in the more abstract interests of the Empire. There were thousands of planters' sons accustomed to horse and rifle who, compared with the New England militia, would hardly have been missed from their homes. But such troops as were raised were mostly 'poor whites' or frontiersmen with their own families in peril. One might be permitted to imagine that a chance of adventure and fighting would have stirred up a naturally brave, country-bred race from their humdrum self-absorbed existence in such a cause. But it didn't. They were ready enough to fight the King's soldiers twenty years later, and those of the North a

century afterwards, when they considered their rights and liberties were threatened. But in the Seven Years' War they were content to let the King's soldiers do practically all the work in a matter which concerned them almost more than it did the Crown. For the French had intentions, which they seemed at the moment strong enough to fulfil, of penning the colonies permanently in upon their Atlantic seaboard, and even cherished vague ambitions of some day wiping them out altogether.

When the French peril had been removed the Virginia gentry were, let us hope, grateful to the King's armies and the British taxpayer, who had borne the greater burden and presented the province and its land companies already initiated with an illimitable West. There were neither cities, church bells, nor pulpits, as in the North, to fling the echoes of a United Imperial triumph even across the Atlantic. The Legislature, we know, and the taverns, for the Virginians were a convivial lot, we feel sure, joined in the rejoicing. When certain British officers and other Europeans who 'knew America' foretold future trouble, with the French out of the way, none of them, I fancy, were thinking of Virginia. Few indeed knew the colony or its people. The small southern expeditions had operated in the far backwoods, and the irregulars who accompanied them were, with some exceptions, not representative of political or social Virginia. There seems little doubt that when a few years later trouble with the colonies began, the British public assumed that Virginia and her neighbours would be the last to show active resistance, not only from their apathy in the late wars, but for their quasi-aristocratic atmosphere and English prepossessions. One or two Statesmen shrewdly combated this assumption. Burke, if memory serves me, pointed out that a society accustomed to dominate an ill-educated white population as well as slaves would be even more jealous of outside interference than a more equally balanced, free democracy. More even than most agricultural communities, too, the Virginians detested mere necessary internal taxation. Even to-day there is hardly a metalled road in the State. Successive generations of intelligent, educated people have floundered on saddle or wheels, with infinite toil, loss and labour, over deep mud or sandy tracks, unimaginable to the European, rather than pay for normal highways.

The resistance of Virginia to the Crown more than surprised most Englishmen of that day. As a matter of fact, the Virginians did as a whole cut the knot with greater reluctance than the New

Englanders, more ready though the latter were in after days to let bygones be bygones. Indeed, the pronounced action of Virginia has always been something of a puzzle to the few outsiders in whom intimate association has awakened a peculiar interest in her earlier days when she counted for so much in our Oversea Dominions. Her dominant class were undoubtedly, I think, somewhat rushed into the business, not by the masses but by their own extremists. Local conditions had bred many clever political lawyers, like Patrick Henry, R. H. Lee, and Jefferson, who with a few others carried enough of the better class with them by their fervid orations to force the pace of the rest, while the fatuity of the Governor, Lord Dunmore, made it most difficult for the moderate. There was certainly a much greater apprehension of a resort to arms than in New England, where war was more familiar. For the Virginians of that day were an easy-going and unmartial race. Washington, with a few back-country officers, almost alone among the well-to-do had shown any taste for that military adventure for which the French and Indian wars had provided such great opportunities. It is constantly asserted that the arrogance of British officers in the French war towards their colonial brothers-in-arms contributed sensibly to an anti-British feeling. The traditional friction between these two types of soldier must at this very first experience have been conspicuous enough, but in truth Virginia shared very little in such an experience. In the comparative uniformity with which the Virginians drifted into war and a declaration of Independence something must be allowed for the dread of running counter to prevalent local opinion, which has always been a characteristic of the South. Unlike the Carolinas and New York, there were very few declared loyalists other than the numerous Scotch merchants and traders who formed virtually a class to themselves, being out there mainly with the intention of making money and returning home again. Though Virginia, as everyone knows, played a conspicuous part in the Revolutionary War, it seems certain that there were a very large number of secretly reluctant patriots, at the start at any rate—easy-going timid people who from a combination of circumstances found themselves in a position from which escape was not easy.

But the most curious chapter of all, perhaps, is the enthusiasm with which these slave-owning communities of the South accepted the French Revolution, and the hysterical acclamations with which they greeted its first foolish, arrogant, and feather-headed envoys

in their progress through the country—to the disgust of Washington and cooler heads. They even donned red caps and danced round Liberty poles to the edification, one may well fancy, of their negro slaves, though the latter did gain something in a marked improvement in their treatment, which had hitherto been unfeeling. That the American Revolution was a stimulating factor in that of the French, and that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, are of course truisms, though there was no analogy between them. In all this, however, the great influence of Jefferson, cunning, unscrupulous, frantically Gallophile, democratic and anti-British, can hardly be overestimated. The American Revolution greatly weakened the Virginian aristocracy, though few had faced the persecution and ruin resistance to it would have entailed, while the French upheaval still further accentuated the growth of democratic feeling. Jefferson swept away entail and primogeniture. The Church was not merely disestablished, but temporarily despoiled in buildings and furniture by the commoner sort, as a symbol of British tyranny; and even infidelity had a partial and brief vogue. There is evidence that many of the Anglican gentry considered that Independence had perhaps been purchased too dearly, despite the repudiation of their large individual indebtedness to British merchants. They fought hard both for entail and a State Church in the Legislature, and were only defeated by small majorities.

Class distinctions ceased to be labelled as hitherto, while an 'outdoor' assumption of equality became incumbent. All this no doubt assisted in creating a small minority who repudiated Jefferson and all his works, and stood by the Federalist views of Washington and Hamilton, combined with a desire for friendship with the Mother Country. But in due course a reaction set in and Virginia returned to a modification of its old conservative atmosphere with a far larger, less individually substantial, and in great measure an upstart aristocracy.¹ But the bulk of the State and indeed of the South remained bitterly anti-British even to that second

¹ By the Civil War the old leading colonial families had become a minority among the vastly increased but individually less well endowed gentry class, which was simply defined by the ordinary standards of education and refinement, as opposed to the far more numerous class of plain farmers and slave owners who had no social qualifications at all. A clear majority of the claimants now in Virginia and scattered all over the United States to 'old Virginia family' are in fact the descendants of the eighteenth-century prototypes of this last class. The polite fiction with its *aristocratic* suggestion was always allowed to pass as it signified nothing, but flattered and still flatters the harmless vanity of great numbers of excellent people with foggy ideas on genealogy and history.

generation which virtually brought about the war of 1812-15, in the teeth of the active opposition of New England. Why this persistent, unreasoning ill-feeling among people of pure English stock towards a Mother Country from which they had victoriously freed themselves, but for whose ideals they had always professed sympathy, may well be asked. I have asked myself a thousand times in vain, and I knew these pleasant, frank, talkative and reminiscent people intimately for years in their own homes, when the ex-slaves and their late masters were nearly all still *in situ*, and have read at one time or another almost everything local or otherwise, ancient or modern, that has ever been recorded of them. I am old enough, too, to have known more than one rustic veteran who was out in the war of 1812, while nominally in my service was an ancient negro, well over a hundred, who could distinctly remember the local rejoicings at the close of the Revolutionary War. Another near by, and still alert, had belonged to Patrick Henry and served him as houseboy.

When in 1796 (Jay's Treaty) Washington and Hamilton settled all outstanding difficulties between the two countries on mutually equitable terms, no State joined more vociferously in the howl of execration that fell on their heads than Washington's own. It was not merely the terms of the Treaty which provoked the uproar, but the fact that one had been made at all with a country so bitterly and irrationally hated. There was no just cause for this unnatural attitude. The old-fashioned American historians, largely repudiated by modern American experts, profess to find it in slights, insults and jealous hatred on the part of Great Britain towards her emancipated offspring. There was, in truth, wonderfully little of this, but on the contrary an immense amount of good will, as the journals, speeches, and private correspondence of the period abundantly prove. In her rather trying position England, upon the whole, behaved extremely well. But a major portion of the American public, in which Virginia was conspicuous, wouldn't have it so. Slights and insults were expected at this no doubt hyper-sensitive period and were readily discovered in trifles by the prickly colonial temperament, whereas the French Republic heaped insult upon insult till even Jefferson and the South turned. Washington, while President, was vituperated by the politicians of his own State with a wealth of invective that would astonish an English reader. His efforts to construct and cement a nation, by means of the new Constitution, out of a collection of still jarring Commonwealths saturated with provincial prejudices, brought down on his head a

torrent of opprobrious terms of which 'Monarchist' and 'pro-Briton' were the mildest, though they moved that strong far-sighted man no whit. He is sometimes described as a typical Virginian, which is logical, though but a half-truth, and often as a mere English country gentleman—which is absurd—by English writers who do not realise what changes of outlook four generations of colonial life bring about. It is open to question, too, whether a man who stands a head and shoulders above a community can be described as typical of it! The typical Virginian of that day, and of most days, reckoned his own State before the Union. If he had travelled abroad, which he rarely did, he would have been startled, as he still would have been a century later, at hearing himself called an American. Washington detested all this as fraught with danger to the new nation, which we all know it proved. He himself thought 'continentally' and regarded himself first and foremost as an American. He had no sectional preferences in his friendships, and we know that his affection for the New England soldiers who had fought under him was every bit as strong as for his Virginia troops. In his last years of retirement at Mount Vernon he at least knew from a thousand personal tributes and not a few admiring pilgrims that the best in England held him in reverence and wished well to the young Republic. He must often have groaned then, as he had groaned in office, at the rabid prejudices which permeated his own State even more than most.

With the nineteenth century, the opening of the nearer west and the rapid progress of the free States, Virginia, herself stationary, subsided into 'a land of dreams and soft amenities'¹ till the great

¹ With the nineteenth century Virginia lost the sanguine characteristics of a young country. She was already looking backward. In the words of a recent Virginia historian, she became 'a land of dreams and soft amenities, incidentally conjuring up a picturesquely feudal and colonial past which bore slight relation to realities. In common with the South generally she adopted an incongruous mediaeval phraseology in social matters, and revelled in rather far-fetched English analogies. A planter on horseback became 'a cavalier,' the youth of a neighbourhood its 'chivalry,' the men at a dance 'Sir Knights,' the ladies 'demoiselles,' while 'courtly' and 'aristocratic' were epithets flung about without restraint. And all this came, it is asserted, from the immense influence of the Waverley novels on a receptive, isolated, and rather sentimental people. It found application naturally in the Civil War, and has permeated Southern literature and expression ever since. Roomy eighteenth-century farmhouses on the James, for instance, are 'stately mansions' and quite often 'baronial halls.' Scores of American writers have found copy in the much idealised 'before-the-war' pictures of 'vast estates and hordes of slaves,' whereas the Virginia gentry were on an inevitably small scale both in revenue and slaves compared to the old West Indian planters. Every goose, in short, became a swan.

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Civil War called out all that was best in her English blood, and closed disastrously, as it then seemed to her, the second chapter of her history. Long before that her best young blood had been emigrating to Kentucky and Missouri, with bunches of slaves, though too many by far of these remained on her wasting lands. Individual ownership was small, as was the substance of even the larger owners, compared with the holdings and the wealth of the West Indian planters, but almost everybody had some negroes. The State seemed rapidly drifting to economic disaster when in the 'thirties and 'forties the development of cotton-growing in the more southerly States created a new demand for slaves at high prices, and Virginia, till the Civil War, mainly existed on the sale of her surplus negroes. The old anti-British feeling had long been submerged under the more vital antipathies between North and South which led up to the war, and continued on the latter's part for long after it. It could never of course revive in anything approaching the old manner—particularly after the theoretic reaction in favour of England, already alluded to, which was common after the Civil War. But the strange thing is that it should survive at all, even in the comparatively polite form it assumed at the Venezuela crisis and, as we may suppose, before the present war, in a generation quite severed from its old domestic traditions. I am inclined to attribute it to the abnormal conservatism which in some ways distinguished the Virginian above all other Anglo-Saxons.

A. G. BRADLEY.

THE LEAVE BOAT.

BY GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM.

ALL night long the wind shrieked, rattling windows to the discomfort of those who were lucky enough to have roofs over their heads, threatening the dwellers in tents with the utter destruction of their shelters. Very early, before the dawn of the winter morning, the rain began, not to fall—the rain in a full gale of wind does not fall—but to sweep furiously across the town. The long stretch of the quay was desolate. Water lay in deep pools between the railway lines among the sleepers. Water trickled from deserted waggons and fell in small cascades from the roofs of sheds. The roadway, crossed and recrossed by the railway, had little muddy lakes on it and broad stretches of mud, rather thicker than the water of the lakes.

Far down the quay lay a steamer with two raking funnels—the leave boat, the ship of heart's desire for many men. Clouds of smoke, issuing defiantly from her funnels, were immediately swept sideways by the wind and beaten down by the rain. The smoke ceased to be smoke, became a duller greyness added to the greyness of the air, dissolved into smuts and was carried to earth—or to the faces and hands of wayfarers—by the rain. Already at seven o'clock there were men going along the quay—a steady stream of men, tramping, splashing, stumbling towards the steamer. In the matter of the sailing of leave boats, rumour is the sole informant, and rumour had it that this boat would start at 10 A.M. Leave is a precious thing. He takes no risks who has secured the coveted pass to Blighty. It is a small matter to wait three hours on a rain-swept quay. It would be a disaster beyond imagining to miss the boat.

Officers make for the boat in twos or threes. Their trench coats, buttoned tightly, flap round putted or gaitered legs. Drenched haversacks hang from their shoulders. Parties of men, fully burdened with rifles and kit, march down from the rest camps where they have spent the night. The mud of the trenches is still thick on them. One here and there wears his steel helmet. They carry all sorts of strange packages, sacks tied at the mouth, parcels sewed up in sacking, helmets of German soldiers slung on knapsacks,

valueless trophies of battlefields, loot from captured dug-outs, pathetically foolish souvenirs bought in French shops, all to be presented to the wives, mothers, sweethearts, who wait at home.

A couple of army Sisters, lugging suit-cases, clinging to the flying folds of their grey cloaks, walk bent forward against the wind and rain. A blue-coated Canadian nurse, brass stars on her shoulder-straps, has given an arm to a V.A.D. girl, a creature already terrified at the prospect of crossing the sea on such a day. The rain streams down their faces, but the Canadian is perhaps accustomed to worse rain. She is smiling and walks jauntily, a young woman of immense vitality. A heavy grey motor rushes along, splashing the walkers. Beside the driver is a pile of luggage. Inside, secure behind plate glass from any weather, sits a general. Another motor follows, and still others. British Staff officers and military attachés from Allied nations, the privileged classes of the war, sweep by while humbler men splash and stumble.

But in front of the gangway of the leave boat, as at the gates of paradise, there is no distinction of persons. The mean man and the mighty find the same treatment there. There comes a moment when the car must be left, when crossed sword and baton on the shoulder-straps avail their wearer no more than a single star. A sailor, relentless as Rhadamanthus, stands on the gangway and bars the way to the shelter of the ship. No one—so the order has gone forth—is to be allowed on board before 9 o'clock. There is shelter a few yards behind—a shed. But few seek it. The earliest comers prefer to cluster round the end of the gangway, determined, though they wait hours, to be among the first on board. The crowd grows denser as time goes on. The Canadian Sister, alert and competent, secures a seat on the rail of a disused gangway and plants two neat feet on the rail opposite. An Australian captain, gallant amid extreme adversity, offers the spare waterproof he carries to the shivering V.A.D. A general is wedged tight against a young padre and accepts a light for his cigarette from the bowl of the youth's huge brown pipe. Now and then some one asks a neighbour whether it is likely that the boat will start on such a day. A grizzled major on the outskirts of the crowd says that he has it on the best authority that the port is closed and that there will be no sailings for a week. The news travels from mouth to mouth. But no one stirs. There is a horrid possibility that it may be true; but—well, most men know the reputation of that 'best authority.' He is a liar, worse than Ananias.

The ship rises slowly higher and higher, for the tide is flowing. The gangway grows steeper. From time to time two sailors shift it slightly, retie the ropes which fasten it to the ship's rail. The men on the quay watch the manœuvre hopefully. At 9 o'clock an officer appears on the outside fringe of the crowd. With a civility which barely cloaks his air of patronage, he demands way for himself to the ship. His brassard wins him all he asks at once. On it are the letters A.M.L.O. He is the Assistant Military Landing Officer, and for the moment is lord of all, the arbiter of things more important than life and death. In private life he is perhaps a banker's clerk or an insurance agent. On the battlefield his rank would entitle him to such consideration only as is due to a captain. Here he may ignore a colonel, may say to a brigadier 'Stop pushing.' He has what all desire, the 'Open Sesame' which will clear the way to the ship.

He goes on board, acknowledging with careless grace the salute of one of the ship's officers. He stands on the shelter deck. With calm dignity he surveys the swaying crowd beneath him. 'There's no hurry, gentlemen,' he says. There is no hurry for him. He has risen from his bed at a reasonable hour, has washed, shaved, bathed, breakfasted. He has not stood for hours in drenching rain. The look of him is too much for the general who is wedged beside the padre in the crowd. He speaks :

'What the—? Why the—? When the—? Where the—?'

He is a man of fluent speech, this general. The Canadian Sister leads the applause of the crowd. The general turns to the young clergyman.

'Excuse me, Padre, but really——'

The Army respects the Church, knows that certain necessary forms of speech are not suited to clerical ears. But the Church is human and can sympathise with men's infirmities.

'If I were a general,' said the padre, 'I should say a lot more.'

The general, encouraged, does say more. The A.M.L.O., recognising the rank of his assailant, wilts visibly. The stiffness goes out of him before the delighted eyes of the crowd. Another gangway is lowered. In two thin streams the damp men and dragged women struggle on board the ship. Officers detailed for duty on board—a small band of helpless subalterns—are paraded on the upper deck by the A.M.L.O. To them at least he can still speak with authority. He explains to the bewildered youths what their duties are. Each passenger, so it appears, must wear a life-belt.

It is the business of the subalterns to see that everyone ties round his chest one of these bandoliers of cork.

On the leave boat the spirit of democracy is triumphant. Sergeants jostle commissioned officers. Subalterns seize deck chairs desired by colonels of terrific dignity. Privates with muddy trousers crowd the sofas of the first-class saloon. Discipline, we may suppose, survives. If peril threatened men would fall into their proper places and words of command would be obeyed. But the outward forms of discipline are for a time in abeyance. The spirit of good fellowship prevails. The common joy—an intensified form of the feeling of the schoolboy on the first day of the Christmas holidays—makes one family of all ranks and ages. No doubt also the sea insists on the recognition of new standards of worth. The humblest private who is not seasick is visibly and unmistakably a better man than a field-marshal with his head over the bulwarks. Curious and ill-assorted groups are formed. Men who at other times would not speak to each other are drawn and even squeezed together by the pressure of circumstance.

Between two of the deck-houses on the lower deck of this steamer is a narrow passage. Porters have packed valises and other luggage into it. It is sheltered from the rain and will be secure from showers of flying spray. Careless and inexperienced travellers, searching along the crowded decks for somewhere to sit down, pass this place by unnoticed. Others, accustomed in old days to luxurious travelling, scorn it and seek for comfort which they never find. One or two who before this have crossed the Channel on the leave boat in bad weather know of this nook and make for it. A few others drift into it or are pressed in by the crowd outside. The Canadian Sister, a competent young woman, has found her way here and settled down her helpless V.A.D. on a valise—a lumpy, uncomfortable seat. A private from a Scottish regiment is here. A padre, a grey-headed man with large experience of life, has sat down on the deck, his back against one side of the passage, his feet pressed against the other. He is wedged securely and has a waterproof over his knees. Two Belgians and a Russian Staff officer struggle in the narrow space to adjust their life-belts. A brigadier, a keen-eyed, eager-faced young man, one of those to whom the war has given opportunity and advancement, joins the group. He speaks in French to the Belgians and the Russian. He helps to make the V.A.D. less utterly uncomfortable. He offers a flask and then a cigar to the padre.

There is one subject of conversation. Will the boat start? The Russian is hopeful. Is not England mistress of the seas? The padre is despondent. Once before, in a long-ago time of leave, the boat did not start. The passengers, and he among them, were disembarked. The Scottish private has heard from a friend of his in 'the Signals' that German submarines are abroad in the Channel. The brigadier is openly contemptuous of all information derived from men in 'the Signals.' The Canadian Sister is cheerful. If she were captain of the ship, she says, she would start, and what is more, fetch up at the other side.

The captain, it appears, shares her spirit. The ship does start. The harbour is cleared and at once the tossing begins. The party between the deck-houses sways and reels. It becomes clear very soon that it will be impossible to stand, but sitting down is difficult. The padre has to change his attitude. It is not possible for anyone to sit with outstretched legs. The brigadier warns the Russian to be careful how he bestows himself.

'Don't put your feet on my haversack,' he says. 'There's a bottle of hairwash in it!'

The Russian shifts his feet.

'There'll be a worse spill if you trample on mine,' says the padre. 'There's a bottle of Benedictine in it.'

'Padre!' says the brigadier. 'I'm ashamed of you. I had the decency to call it hairwash.'

The Canadian Sister laughs loud and joyously.

It is noticed that the Scottish private is becoming white. Soon his face is worse than white. It is greyish green. The Canadian Sister tucks her skirts under her. The prospect is horrible. There is no room for the final catastrophe of seasickness. The brigadier is a man of prompt decision.

'Out you go,' he says to the man. 'Off with you and put your head over the side.'

The padre bestirs himself, seizes the helpless Scot by the arm and pushes him out. The next to succumb is the Russian Staff officer. His face is pallid and his lips blue. The V.A.D. is past caring what happens. The two Belgians are indifferent. The Canadian Sister, the brigadier, and the padre take silent counsel, their eyes meeting.

'I can't talk French,' says the padre.

'I can,' said the brigadier.

He does. He explains politely to the Russian the indecency of

being seasick in that crowded space. He points out that there is one course only open to the sufferer—to go away and bear the worst elsewhere. Honour calls for the sacrifice. The Russian opens his eyes feebly and looks at the deck beyond the narrow limits of his refuge. It is swept at the moment by a shower of spray. He shudders and closes his eyes again. The brigadier persuades, exhorts, commands. The Russian shakes his head and intimates that he neither speaks nor understands French. He is a brave and gallant gentleman. Shells cannot terrify him, nor the fiercest stuttering of machine-guns make him hesitate in advance. But in a certain stage of seasickness the ears of very heroes are deaf to duty's call.

The padre takes the cigar from his mouth and crushes the glowing end on the deck. He is not seasick, but there are times when tobacco loses its attractiveness. The brigadier becomes strangely silent. His head shrinks down into the broad upturned collar of his coat. Only the Canadian Sister remains cheerfully buoyant, her complexion as fresh, her cheeks as pink as when the rain washed them on the quay.

The throbbing of the engines ceases. For a brief time the ship wallows in the rolling seas. Then she begins to move backwards towards the breakwater of the harbour. The brigadier struggles to his feet and peers out.

'England at last,' he says. 'Thank goodness!'

Women, officers, and men fling off the life-belts they have worn and crowd to the gangways. With shameless eagerness they push their way ashore. The voyage is over. Trains—good, swift, easy-rolling English trains—wait in long lines at the platform. Leave—the golden eight days of it—long expected, eagerly striven for, has really begun at last.

THE TALE OF TOTI.

BY GINO SPERANZA AND LEWIS R. FREEMAN.

I WORKED my way forward through the shifting crowd of people that was gathered in front of the little postcard shop in the Via Nazionale, and presently reached a position from where the window-display—evidently the magnet drawing them together—was visible. At a first glimpse—viewed through the feathers of a lady's hat—it appeared of small interest. In the centre of the window was a neutral-tinted drawing of a *bersagliere* charging over the tumbled sandbags of what had once been the parapet of a trench, and all around were rows and piles of postcard reproductions of the larger original. It was only when I drew near and was able to scan the sketch more closely that I saw that the soldier had only one leg, and that the object which he was represented as throwing in the direction of the retreating enemy was a crutch.

Then I understood why it was the people around me were giving voice to such exclamations as '*gamba sola!*' '*mutilato!*' '*poverino!*' '*fantastico!*' and the like; but how it was that Italy was in such straits for men as to have to employ one-legged ones in the front line was not so clear. I bought one of the cards and found on the reverse a paragraph in Italian, evidently an order accompanying the award of a medal of valour. Here is the translation:

ENRICO TOTI.

'Volunteered despite the loss through accident of his left leg; after rendering important services on Hill 70 (east of Selz), during the military engagements of April, he took part in the battle of August 6, which resulted in the capture of Hill 85 (east of Monfalcone), fearlessly advancing on the entrenched enemy although twice wounded. Mortally struck by a third bullet, with heroic exaltation, he hurled his crutch at the enemy and died kissing his helmet, with a stoicism worthy of his superbly Italian soul.'

(Monfalcone, August 6, 1916; gold medal awarded, *motu proprio*, by His Majesty the King.)

Toti—the name had a familiar sound, and I even seemed to connect it with a one-legged man. But where? As the grappling-hooks of my memory were still dragging vainly for the fugitive

recollection when I returned to my hotel, I sought the omniscient *concierge* on the chance of uncovering a clue.

'Who was Enrico Toti, the one-legged *bersagliere* who was awarded the Gold Medal for Valour?' I asked; 'and tell me also, while you are about it, if it is really true that Italy has used up her men so fast that she has to recruit from the *mutilati*?'

The *concierge* looked at me with the same hurt expression that had come into his face the time I had asked him—not without reason, I thought—if the telephone system of Rome was really a contemporary of the Coliseum.

Of course the Italian Government didn't recruit Enrico Toti, and of course Enrico Toti went and volunteered. And of course they told him he could be of no use in the army, and then—being Enrico Toti—of course he went and joined the army willy-nilly. The *concierge* was surprised I had never heard about him.

'But I think I have heard something of him, somewhere or other,' I said; 'tell me who he was and what he did.'

'I only know what the papers have printed,' he said, 'for though Toti was a familiar figure in his own part of Rome—he was a Trasteverino—it was a part that I never had occasion to go to. He lost one of his legs—in a railway accident, I believe—when he was about twenty, and yet, so strong was he in spirit and in what was left of his body, he went right on with his life just as if nothing had happened. He had won quite a reputation in a number of branches of sport before his accident, notably in bicycling, swimming, and boxing. He still continued to ride his bicycle (though not to race, of course), and in the water he is said to have actually won a number of medals—in contests with some of the best swimmers of Rome—in spite of his lost leg. And though he was no longer able to box, his arms became so strong that he could tear in half two packs of cards. Four or five years ago he started on a tour of the world on his bicycle, and actually did manage to kick his machine through most of the countries of Europe before he got into some kind of trouble with the Austrian authorities in Vienna and was sent back to Italy. After a few months in Rome he again became restless, and this time went to Egypt with the idea of cycling to the Cape through the heart of Africa. He started—'

'Egypt!'—'Cape-to-Cairo!'—'One-legged Italian cyclist!'—at last I had connected up my train of memory. Instantly there sharpened in my mind a picture that had been trying to float into

focus ever since I had seen the drawing in the postcard shop. I was looking from the cool awninged deck of a Nile stern-wheeler that had floundered away from the Shellal quay a couple of hours previously. To the right rose the lotus-crowned columns of the Temple of Philae, reflected in the impounded waters of the lake backed up behind the wall of the great dam at Assuan; to the left were brown-black rock-hills of Upper Egypt, radiating in fluttering scarves of pulsing air the beating rays of the mid-afternoon sun. Across the face of the desert range was the gash of a road—probably only a donkey or camel track—and up this were creeping three figures, which my glass revealed to be men plodding beside pushed bicycles. Two of the figures moved evenly and naturally, if a little weariedly; but the third—the leader who was setting the by no means leisurely pace—bobbed and swayed with the unmistakable action of the vigorous cripple vaulting along on crutches.

The fluent streaming of the mirage dimmed the detail of the image in my binoculars as the leader of the little party bobbed up into silhouette against the skyline, and I sensed rather than saw the resolute set of a pair of powerful shoulders, which not even the 'hump' given them from the crutches or the loom of a bulky pack could quite conceal. He waited a few moments for his companions—settling himself on his bicycle (propped up, apparently, by one of the crutches) meanwhile—and then shoved off and coasted out of sight where the track dipped toward the desert valley beyond.

That was my first—and indeed my last and only—glimpse of Enrico Toti, the one-legged Italian cyclist of whom I had been hearing ever since I arrived in Egypt a fortnight previously. He had been in Alexandria and Cairo for several weeks, it appeared, making preparations for his arduous journey, and living in the interim by selling postcards of himself and his bicycle and drawing 'lightning sketches' and performing feats of strength in the music-halls.

'He is one of the most astonishing characters I have ever met,' an official of the Egyptian State Railways said to me one day in Cairo. 'He is brimming with confidence, burning with enthusiasm; more the kind of type you might imagine the early martyrs were than a common globe-trotting vagabond. He doesn't seem to care in the least for money—beyond enough to live on—and, with one leg and empty pockets, he is setting off as coolly for the Cape, *via* the deserts and jungles of tropical Africa, as I would start for home by the "P. & O." Keep your eye open for him, as you'll

doubtless overtake him somewhere along your way to Khartoum. Take my word for it, he's a chap you'll find well worth talking to.'

Toti had gathered seven recruits—all on bicycles—for his Cairo-to-the-Cape pilgrimage when he finally pedalled out past the Pyramids and off along the ribbon of macadam that leads up the Nile. At Luxor—for the roads were growing soft as the metalling grew patchier—I heard of them as five; and out of Assuan (so it was reported to me on the day of my arrival) but three had ridden away the night before on the burnt desert track that winds up toward the barrage and Shellal. These were the ones (I had been watching for them) that I picked out with my glass on the caravan track over the hills opposite Philae. Two of them—as I learned afterwards—dropped out on the way across Upper Egypt, and it was only a famished Italian with one leg who pushed doggedly on to the Sudan border, where a kind but inexorable British official deemed it his duty to turn back a penniless cripple from a desert which even Kitchener—pushing to avenge Gordon—had refused to lead his army across before a railway had been built.

The lone pilgrim had taken the disappointment of being turned back in very good part, so they told me at Atbara; but had promptly countered with a demand for 'compensation' in the form of permission to swim back to Cairo by the Nile. With the current, he had urged, he could easily make from forty to fifty miles in a ten-hour day; while as for crocodiles—he was sure his remaining leg was far too tough to tempt even the hungriest saurian. Besides, one good kick with that same leg—

'He really seemed a good deal put out,' the Commissioner had told me, 'because we would not undertake to ship his bicycle and let him go ahead with the mad idea.'¹

And now, it appeared, this stout-hearted cripple had just died the most spectacular and acclaimed of Italian war heroes. Surely, if there was any way of getting the facts, an account of how it had come about would be worth writing for the world outside of Italy. My search began and ended in a humble fourth-floor flat in a tenement near where the Porta Maggiore pierces the wall of old Rome.

I confess that as we climbed the whitewashed, drearily 'hygienic' stairs of this model workmen's tenement, I felt a doubt as to whether it really could have been 'the place' of such a

¹ I was inclined at the time to take this story with a grain of salt, but have recently seen a postcard from Toti to his mother stating that he had this very plan in mind.

romantic figure as Enrico Toti. But the name was on the door of the fourth flat back, and in the somewhat gaudy *salottino* into which we were ceremoniously ushered was the single-pedal bicycle of the one-legged *bersagliere*, and the crutch with the sharp lance-head stuck in it which he used to drag around on his night prowls on the bloody Carso in search of adventures with the enemy.

Even this evidence, however, was somehow not convincing; neither were the medals, the diplomas, and the newspaper clippings regarding the thousand-and-one adventures of this singular and happy rover, which the father wished particularly that we should see. Surely all this, I thought, is not the stuff out of which was moulded that heroic soul, that daring spirit, and that almost Franciscan sweetness which blended so strikingly in Enrico Toti.

I turned rather hopelessly to the old mother. 'What sort of a boy was he when he was little?' I asked; and the somewhat bent figure in black which had remained in the background while the men of the family were occupying the centre of that modest stage looked intently at me, hesitating an instant before answering. Then the tenderest smile crossed her white face, with a real flicker of mischievousness in it, as she said slowly: 'He was . . . he was, my dear *signore* . . . well, what you might call a most vivacious boy!' And then I knew that we were at last on the golden trail of romance.

'He had a new idea every day, or planned a different adventure,' she went on, but instantly, as if a little remorseful, she explained: 'Ah! but such a good boy, and so attached to his family.'

I did not dare ask her how it came to pass that, devoted as he was to his home, he went to sea at fourteen, enlisting in the Italian navy, and roamed the ocean spaces for nine years, hoping to measure himself with some terrible pirate crew in strange, far-away waters, as he finally did in a naval engagement in the Red Sea, of which he has left us a delightfully breezy account in his travel-notes.

I did not dare ask this, but the eyes of that mother were reading clearly through my silence.

'Do you know why he tried to run away from his ship?' she asked me, as if we had been speaking of his long naval career. 'He and his chum had planned to swim to land, work their way to Terra del Fuego, and bring the light of civilisation to the savages there.' Even she smiled as we followed her gaze to the wall opposite where hung a crayon portrait of Enrico as a gentle-eyed sailor of His Majesty's Navy.

'I have a good photograph of him . . . somewhere,' she said, as she went unerringly to that 'somewhere,' which she knew as exactly as everything else relating to her son, and produced a group-photograph of the crew of the old cruiser *Emanuele Filiberto* for our admiration. She searched for her Enrico on the picture she held upside down. 'I can't see very well in this light,' she explained as she passed the picture to me, 'but you can pick him out easily; he is the little boy sitting close to a big cannon.'

We talked of a hundred things about the boy, especially of his restless desire to try his hand at everything, at writing and drawing, at carving and cabinet-making, at electricity, mechanics, and chemistry. 'And he was a pretty good hand at painting,' commented the father, as he spread before us water-colours and oil canvases of madonnas, seascapes, and African scenes. 'But as an artist,' observed the mother, with the same mischievous flicker in her eyes, 'he liked best to paint his pictures upside down; it was a different way of doing from the method of other painters.'

As we talked I grew bold with the sense that between the mother and me there had sprung a quick understanding of her son, and so I found myself asking: 'When he was hurt . . . when the locomotive ran him down and . . . cut off his leg . . . after he pulled through and came home . . . was he . . . depressed?'

The father sententiously interjected: 'He could not die; his country needed him . . .'

'The railroad had sent a casket for his burial,' commented the other male member of the family, who felt very seriously his rôle of official historian of his heroic brother-in-law, 'so certain was everybody that he would die. But a glorious destiny. . . '

'Ah! he was very blue and sad when he came home,' sighed the little mother.

'No! No!' argued the more monumentally inclined father. 'It was like his other accident when he was wiring the halls of the Exposition buildings at Macerata and got a shock from a short circuit which knocked him down a twenty-foot scaffolding. . . '

'They closed the Exposition in his honour,' the mother readily granted.

'As a sign of respect for his death,' corrected the family historian; 'but after three hours of artificial respiration he came round and was back on his work in a few days.'

'He was reserved for a greater destiny!' concluded the father.

'Don't you want to see his patents?' asked the mother, and as

we looked over the various devices of Enrico Toti's insatiable inventiveness, we wondered what truly helpful contrivances might have been evolved by that quick, sensitive brain if better disciplined and more fully schooled.

'I think he liked this best of all.' It was the mother who was calling our attention to a photograph showing Toti working a combination tricycle and aeroplane of his own devising.

'He could make it fly at will,' explained the father.

'To be exact,' corrected the historian, 'at the imperfect stage he left his invention it could only rise a few inches for a few seconds.'

'But that was enough for him to skim over the little streams he met in his long, solitary travels,' defended the mother a trifle aggressively.

It was at her own suggestion that we went to what had been Enrico Toti's bedroom. 'You must see his books,' proudly said this woman who could not read. 'Those in the upper shelf he bought when he was a boy; in the lower are those he got after the accident which cost him his leg.'

Even without such physical division one could easily have guessed which beckoned his blithe spirit in the years of his physical perfection, and out of which he drew for strength in his brave adversity. Homer's *Odyssey* looked big and joyous in the upper shelf, and Plutarch's *Lives*, and a treatise on 'The Rights of Nature and the Rights of Man'; but it is from the lower shelf of neatly kept volumes that his indomitable spirit seemed to ring out. *Smiles' 'Will is Power' and 'Character' and 'Duty' by the same author, and in close, upright formation: 'How to Succeed in Life,' 'Arise, Take up Thy Bed,' and 'The Art of Renewing One's Soul and Body.'*

Both the upper and the lower shelves count the works of poets and of adventurers; but while the upper includes burning visions of loveliness such as D'Annunzio's 'Laudi,' the lower ones hold such as would tend to stimulate the fineness of the imagination, like Carducci's *Odes*.

We see here, then, how the accident which had crippled Toti's strong body seemed to have added a new and inspiring zest to life. Success with such a handicap would now mean more than ordinary success. What he had read, what he had visioned, and what he had dreamed, shaped themselves through his adversity into a definite plan of life, and into a workable ideal; he could be an example unto men, an example of that self-will and self-strength

to which all men could attain, since he, who was heavily handicapped, had achieved them wholly from within.

Thus we find him travelling on his one-pedal bicycle in Europe and in Africa, starting often without money, paying his way by exhibitions of athletic feats or by drawing and painting pictures by lightning strokes, or, as he loved best, upside down. We find him in Russia, in Holland, and in the far North, where a conscienceless German impresario robs him of all his little savings. Perhaps in the letter he wrote home describing his loss we may find the seeds of that burning resentment and indignation against the lack of the sense of fair play in the Teutons, which later germinates into a throbbing hatred for the *Tedeschi* who held unredeemed Italy in bondage.

Yet neither this incident, nor more significant ones, such as the refusal of the Austrian authorities to allow him to pedal through Vienna unless he removed the flaming tricolor sash he wore over his bicycle jacket to display his nationality—not even this incident, which cut short his trip as he refused to submit to the Austrian demands, could for long depress his roving, glad spirits. All he wished was change and new impressions, and the chance to build ever more imposing dream castles. For money he had little use; even the damages paid him by the railroad for the loss of his leg he promptly ‘loaned’ to needy friends and neighbours; yet he possessed a singularly fine sense of responsibility to his body—a responsibility to keep it strong as a useful instrument of his will and as an object-lesson to other men of what could be done with it even under adverse circumstances.

Indeed this sense of example grew, with time, into almost an apostleship; the lovable egoism of his ardent nature turned, more and more, into an ardent altruism.

Thus in a railroad men’s union, where political machinations are driving a good man out of office, he goes to the rescue of right against might with a carefully prepared address in which philosophic and social theories blend with a burning indignation. ‘The defence of truth,’ he tells his opponents, ‘is the task of the just; to assure to it its triumph is the duty of the strong.’

The young, especially, appeal to his apostleship, the young with the handicaps of poverty. For them he writes a little book telling how ‘the world needs men who are strong and know how to endure,’ taking his *motif* from Bacon’s dictum that ‘man hath not the full consciousness of his powers until he tries, thinks and wills.’ In a

few homely examples he shows how failure and success result from our character and will and are not the product of fortuitous circumstances. 'Be persevering,' he concludes his advice to struggling youths, 'work hard and hopefully, and the future will shine to you lovely and serene, for ye represent the victors, the conquerors, and the heroes of life.'

Wishing to add example to precept he gathered about him the boys of the neighbourhood, the loafers, and the down-and-outs of the streets, and started a toy industry for them. He kept them busy and interested by designing new things and new ways of making old things, till the undertaking developed into a paying concern in which he did the hard work and the boys got most of the profits. The shop he used as a social settlement, enforcing discipline, teaching fair play and the value of patience and persistence, and rewarding merit or good work by tickets for the theatres and the cinemas.

Then came the war, and one thought, one supreme thought, possessed the restless soul of Enrico Toti: to avenge the Italian martyrs of Austrian oppression and to raise the Italian tricolor on the historic San Giusto at Trieste.

The father began telling us of the various applications his son had made to the War Department to be allowed to enlist as a volunteer, but it was the mother who gave us the picture of what really happened when the war began.

'Even when Enrico applied he knew they would refuse a cripple on general principles; so he promptly bought himself the uniform of a private in the Italian artillery, loaded his wheel with seventy kilos of everything imaginable, tucked away carefully an Italian flag under his coat, and . . . *addio!*'

At the railroad station on his way northward people gathered about this unusual fighting man, thinking him a convalescing mutilated hero returning to a well-earned rest. But all the explanation the curious would get from him was the laconic statement: 'I am off to the Front!' and he said this in such a way that no one dared ask more.

'This,' he once allowed himself to explain, as he pointed to his crutch, 'has never taken courage from me; now I should look upon it with horror if it deprived me of the chance to fight.'

It was due to the sympathetic intuition of the Duke of Aosta, to whom Enrico Toti managed to present himself, that he was finally

allowed to enlist regularly as a cyclist in the dashing *bersaglieri* corps and assigned to the Lower Isonzo sector.

'And then,' as his mother said, as she showed us his letters from the Front—'then life *really* began.'

As the men chosen for an attack file before his eager eyes, he writes: 'All walk forth with the pride of having been called to go under fire to avenge the martyrs who generously gave their life-blood for the loveliest and the highest of all ideals—the greatness of Italy!' The thought of unredeemed Italy is his constant, consuming vision. In his watches on the lower Isonzo he gazes on Trieste, near but still enslaved: 'Trieste, white and mystic in the sunlight, beauteous and desired! My thoughts turn again and again to her, and I look and look . . . tremblingly.'

Yet in his great, ideal passion he does not forget his humbler duties towards his fellow-men. 'When I see one of my companions obliged to do sentry duty while suffering from physical weariness'—I find in a letter full of human compassion—'I smile so as to hide my own weariness and take his place, with my spirit, somehow, all aglow. Then through my mind seems to unfold all the history of Italy, and my heart goes forth to her heroes and her martyrs, and nothing, nothing seems too hard to endure.' On another occasion he insists on taking the place of a soldier who is the father of four children: 'How pleasant it is to forget one's self for the sake of helping another; it is only then that we can really feel the joy of life.'

News comes of the martyrdom of Cesare Battisti, the Irredento, whom Austria captured and hanged as a common criminal. Toti's long-simmering hatred breaks forth furiously, and he intensifies his propaganda along every imaginable line. To friends who cannot fight he writes, urging them to subscribe to the war loans: 'War is carried on with money,' he tells them, 'and this time we must win at any cost and no matter what the sacrifice.' To his parents who urge him not to expose himself unnecessarily to danger he defiantly replies: 'Those who love us should think only that for the honour of their country men die with the serenity of saints, happy to immolate themselves to an ideal which humanity has always cherished.' And to all he knows, to friends and to soldiers, he passes on the war cry: '*Fuori i Barbari! Fuori Barbari!*' (out with the barbarians!).

Fortune soon smiles on him. Easter Day sees him not only a soldier of Italy, but wounded in her holy cause. 'Wounded, but

not daunted ! ' he writes to his mother ; and in five days he is back in the fighting line. ' I am stronger than ever,' he explains, ' I have ceased to know what fatigue means. All the hardships of the trenches seem as nothing when *Savoja !* sounds, and we throw ourselves upon the enemy, wresting from him, bit by bit, the land which is Italy's.'

It is coming, it is coming ! The vision of a great battle exalts his soul. ' Shortly we shall begin a big offensive. I shall be at the head of my *bersaglieri !*' The blood is astir, the ardour of his strong manhood breaks flamingly through all that he writes at this time. ' I feel like a little Napoleon,' he informs his mother with bubbling boyishness, ' but a Napoleon useful to his country.' *Avanti ! Avanti !* rings through his letters now ; life, not death—joy, not anxiety, sings in them. ' My next note I shall mail you from Gorizia. Peace is certain. My railroad pass will be useless, as it will be a quicker trip home from Trieste by boat !'

It is coming, it is coming ! the day of days ! ' My daring shall conquer over the cunning of the enemy. I shall hold my post with the last life throb of my being. I shall be a light and a warning to all who dare speak of human cowardice and fear. . . . And when I shall come home there will be a medal pinned to my breast ; even if only a bronze medal, it will be worth bringing to you.'

Two days afterwards, when he fell, thrice wounded, dying with a gesture which will become legendary, it was the king himself, Commander-in-Chief of all the armies of fighting Italy, who decreed to Enrico Toti the highest military honour for valour on the field of battle.

'COMPULSORY RATIONS.'

BY JANE H. FINDLATER.

WANT, the supreme Food Controller, had long before the war put the Rankine household on short rations.

Although Sandy, the eldest of the family, was just twelve years old he had seven younger brothers and sisters. And now, this autumn of 1915, when everything was so terribly dear and scarce, there had come another baby—a little wan, wrinkled, weary baby that cried all day long. Mother too cried a great deal, and wouldn't get out of bed even though the sun was warm at the cottage door. Sandy, who was wise beyond his years, knew that she had good reason to cry. He understood perfectly well the tragedy personified by the little wailer in the old wooden cradle. Just at first it wouldn't seem to make much difference, '*but come twa year,*' mused Sandy, '*an' he'll be wantin' a bitlie bread*'—and where was the extra bread to come from? Sandy himself was stunted from want of food, white faced, quite unlike a country child. His clothes were thin and ragged, his boots, the cast-off spoils from a kindly lodger at the farm, several sizes too large for his feet. Yet in spite of Sandy's miserable appearance, he was his mother's greatest comfort: 'He's that handy,' she would say with pride, 'and that mindfu' o' me.'

She stood in need of comfort, poor woman, in her wretched home with all these half-starved children, and now in war-time, when a man's labour was worth double its usual value, the household was poorer than ever. Extra money, unfortunately, only meant extra drink to John Rankine, Sandy's father, and he had a convenient way of ignoring the fact that the price of food had risen as well as wages. No wonder then that Mother lay in bed and cried, letting the new baby wail as it liked this brilliant autumn morning: she had lost heart altogether. Sandy in his big boots shambled about the room doing his best to help. As a first step towards order, he drove the other children out of doors, and approached the bed where his mother lay.

'Will I make ye a drop tea, Mither?' he asked, knowing her faith in this restorative. But she only shook her head, and from under her closed eyelids the tears forced their way out and ran down her white, white face.

'Are ye feart there'll no' be enough?' Sandy persisted with terrible intuition. She made no reply. The boy shambled across to the fireplace and reached up for a gaudy tin box that stood upon the shelf. He shook it. Sure enough it was empty. There had been tea in it the night before. Father must have taken it all before he went out at six o'clock that morning.

Something seemed to rise up in Sandy's heart; it sent a wave of colour across his pale face. He set down the empty canister again on the shelf and looked helplessly across the room at Mother, lying there wanting tea and knowing there was none. Sandy went out to the door and stood there for a minute irresolute, bewildered in the sunlight.

'Maggie!' he called, and again 'Maggie!'

Maggie was forgetting her hunger on a swing which the children had somehow contrived to rig up for themselves with an old bit of rope: it hung from the plum tree that grew at the west corner of the house. She slipped off the swing and came towards her brother, conscious that his call must be obeyed, but reluctant to give up her game.

'Gang inside, Maggie, an' bide wi' Mither, she's no' weel; I'm awa tae Mistress Macdonald,' Sandy commanded her. 'Mind ye keep the fire in till I'm hame again.' He had little confidence in Maggie's powers.

The cottage stood alone among fields, surrounded by an amphitheatre of hills: it was like a stage ready for the presentation of some great act; but only this tiny, commonplace tragedy was being played out upon it. In the distance rose the smoke of another cottage, the one to which Sandy was going, and beyond this again, the woods which grew close all round the old deserted house of Kildhrun.

The sharpness of the autumn air was mellowed by brilliant sunshine, yet its nip sent a chill of premonition to Sandy's anxious heart—winter, the arch-enemy of the poor, was drawing near. The boy trudged across the rough grass of the fields, hanging his head low, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, deep in thought. For the problem he had to solve was a very hard one: Mother must have tea immediately, yet he couldn't be a beggar and ask it from Mrs. Macdonald. What, then, could he do?

Pride was strong in Sandy; but love was stronger still, and, perhaps strongest of all, a certain masculine instinct which drove him to provide for the helpless family whose natural protector

was so careless of them. He had started on this quest now, almost without his own volition, trusting that he would solve the problem somehow ; but as he came near Mrs. Macdonald's house, his steps faltered and he almost stopped, for an awful thought had flashed across his mind : '*I'm just like the tinklers !*' he cried, sick with shame. How would he frame his request—in what words ; how preserve any rag of self-respect ? Although he used none of these phrases, the boy felt every shade of meaning which they express.

As he reached the house, Mrs. Macdonald came through the gate, driving her cow into one of the fields. This was a welcome sight to Sandy ; at least he would not need to knock at the door. The woman stopped to inquire for his mother and the baby.

'An' hoo's yer mither, laddie ?' she asked. 'She'll be up an' aboot noo, is she ?'

'Na : she's gey bad the day—she's lyin' an' winna look at onything,' he answered.

'An' wha's mindin' the bairn ?'

'Maggie.'

'An' a' the ither bairns ?'

'They're mindin' theirsels,' Sandy replied, thinking nothing of the fact that Robbie, Jock, Peter, Lizzie, Bella, and wee Jimmy might all by this time have found peace from life's annoy in the deepest pool of the burn.

Mrs. Macdonald made an exclamation of dismay.

'Maggie wad need tae be clever,' she said darkly.

'She's gey fond o' playin' hersel,' Sandy remarked with severity—he could never forgive the unconquerable light-heartedness of Maggie, who at ten years of age preferred the joys of her swing to the shouldering of domestic cares.

'I'm wurkin' east at Robertson's,' Sandy went on. 'They're awfae short-handit the noo—that's the way I canna bide at hame mysel.'

He did not look a very adequate farm labourer, poor child ; but in war time what would you have ? No inspiration had yet come to him about the tea, so he went on talking, to gain time—as older than Sandy have been known to do.

'I'm gettin' five shillin's the week,' he said proudly. 'It's an awfae help ; bread's that dear,' he added, with the serious air of a family man.

'It is that,' Mrs. Macdonald agreed. 'But yer faither'll be

makin' good money thae days ? ' she asked, with no small touch of curiosity in her voice.

'Aye,' Sandy admitted ; but loyalty made him add with more quickness than truth, 'Buits are sic a price, ye ken, an' a man canna want buits.'

Sandy neither loved nor revered his father, but he was not going to wash the dirty linen of the family in public if he could help it.

Mrs. Macdonald saw through his deception perfectly well, and respected Sandy thoroughly for employing it ; she would have said the same in like circumstances.

'Na, na, ye maun hae buits,' she agreed. 'Weel, I maun be movin',' she added, giving a flick to the cow with her willow switch, which made the animal start forward, tearing up a mouthful of the thick wayside grass after the greedy fashion of its kind. Sandy, however, did not move on, and seeing him still standing there, Mrs. Macdonald turned back a step or two.

'Were ye seekin' onything, Sandy ? ' she asked kindly.

'Aye,' Sandy blurted out, 'I was seekin' a drop tea for Mither—we're rin oot the day, an' I havena time tae gang till the shop for't.'

His cheeks flamed as he made his confession, told his second proud lie : then honesty gained the upper hand and he spoke the truth at last.

'I havena the siller, mistress, but I'll wurk for't—I'm no' wantin' tae beg—I'll come ower in the evenin' an' clean the byre tae ye, or ony ither thing ye want.'

Mrs. Macdonald abandoned the cow and turned back to the house, bidding Sandy follow her. There she made up a liberal parcel of tea from her canister and handed it to him : 'Ye're verra welcome, laddie,' she said ; 'an' gin ye look across the nicht there's aye a deal tae dae here wi' a' the beasts.'

Sandy drew a breath of relief. He had been terribly afraid that Mrs. Macdonald would wish to give him a present of the tea, and he could not have borne that. He need not have been afraid : she knew better.

'There's a hauf pund here, is there no' ? ' he asked, anxious to be exact in his dealings. 'An' is it Lipton's 1s. 6d. ? That'll be ninepence the hauf pund. I'll wurk three 'oors for't. Robertson at the farm gies me thruppence the 'oor in war time.'

It was the woman's turn to play with truth now.

'Hoots, my mannies ! there's no' a hauf pund there, an' it's Lipton's 1s. 2d., sae that'll be sixpence. Come doon the nicht an' the morn's nicht an' ye'll pay fine for't. There ye are. . . . Gie yer Mither a good drop o' the tea when ye get hame—mind ye mak it real strong, an' see the kettle's weel through the bile afore ye mak it.'

She would have liked to add scones to the parcel ; but Sandy's hot cheeks told her that this was impossible. He blurted out his thanks and started off across the fields again, clutching the tea to his heart like hid treasure.

The woman stood by the door, shading her eyes from the light, and shook her head as she meditated on the luckless family at the croft and its desperate fortunes.

A very weary little man stumbled home that evening from his long day's work in the harvest field ; for Sandy had only in him the strength of twelve years, and twelve badly fed years at that. Instead of coming home along with Sandy, his father had gone straight off to the village, his wages in his pocket, and it was doubtful if as much as a shilling would be left there by the end of the night.

He was a big, burly man, very unlike poor little Sandy ; even years of hard drinking had made no impression on his strength, and he was able to work like an ox all day long to earn the money for his drink.

There was certainly not much to tempt a man to stay at home in the Rankines' cottage. Although the door stood open all day long, the place smelt of poverty—that ineradicable pungent smell of things that are never thoroughly cleansed and never renewed. Not even the pure wind of the hills could drive this away. The floor was dirty because soap could seldom be bought ; the children were in rags, for even needles and thread cost something ; and every dish and pan in the house seemed to be broken.

To this depressing home, then, Sandy returned, tired to death, and knowing that he must still trudge across the fields to work out the price of the tea for Mrs. Macdonald. Mother was still in bed, though she told him that she was a 'wee thing better' ; but the baby was crying more than ever, and Maggie had reduced the kitchen to a state of unspeakable confusion. Sandy eyed it with dismay ; but there was no time to set things to rights at present, the kitchen must wait till his return from Kildhrun. . . .

The way across the fields seemed long to the boy, and he wondered as he came up to the Macdonalds' cottage what task he would be set to. Mrs. Macdonald met him at the door, a reaping-hook in her hand.

'Ye'll can use a heuk?' she asked.

'Aye.'

'Weel then, gang up tae the auld hoose, there's an awfae nettles roond the barn, Macdonald's wantin' them away. Mind yersel when yer cuttin' an' dinna get a' yer hands stung. Ye'll can manage it?'

'Aye,' Sandy said again. He could manage it well enough, but his heart fell down into the soles of his big untidy boots at the thought of going up to Kildhrun now that the dusk was falling.

This aspect of the case had never struck Mrs. Macdonald for a moment. She handed him the hook, and with an admonition that its edge was very sharp, turned back into the cottage.

Sandy set his face flint-like to the terrifying job: but his heart began to beat quicker and quicker as the distance between himself and the cottage lengthened.

Twice he turned back, just to take a reassuring look at the smoke rising up from the chimney into the clear evening air; then he plunged into the wood that surrounded the old house of Kildhrun.

No solitude is so eerie as that which broods over a deserted house: here man has been and is no more—not at least in the friendly guise that we know. And there creeps over us an awe of that other unfamiliar form in which we fear to encounter what once was flesh and blood like ourselves. The profound stillness where sounds of life should be, falls coldly on the heart, with a warning of our own mortality. 'They were alive like me; I shall soon be dead and forgotten like them' we think. . . .

Sandy, it is true, had not got as far as all this in his thoughts; but certain old, eerie stories floated through his memory and filled him with terror. What if he were to see Something? What if he heard Something? It seemed to the boy that he could not have courage to go on, that he must turn back to the living world instead of plunging deeper and deeper into the wood where the shadows of evening were beginning to fall. Under the great smooth trunks of the beech trees it was perceptibly dark already. Sandy knew that it would be much lighter when he got out from under the shade

of the trees, but then by that time he would be near the house ; and What might he not meet there? Bats were beginning to flicker about under the trees—he hated bats. . . . Yet his debt must be worked off, he could not possibly refuse the bit of work he had been set to do ; it was the price of the tea.

At last he came out from under the trees upon the open bit of sward round the house. An old, whitewashed house, the grass growing up to the doors, the pleasant windows that had once laughed to the sun, shuttered up now and blind like a dead face.

Sandy stood still for a minute to look and listen. The river ran below the house with a faint, babbling sound ; a rabbit dashed out from the bracken in the wood and passed across the sward like a shadow ; a crow flew high above him in the clear sky, carrying a small potato in its bill ; then these signs of life disappeared and all was deadly quiet, only the low voice of the river could still be heard.

Sandy felt that he must get to work. The barn stood a little away from the house and a formidable regiment of nettles grew round the door. Advancing against this army of invaders, Sandy dealt a sweeping blow with the hook which brought down the leaders of the host. He had just straightened his tired little back for another onslaught, when through the still air there rang out a strange, wild cry. Sandy felt himself stiffen with terror so that he could not move hand or foot. Dead silence fell again, then the cry was repeated. The boy looked behind him—there was no one there—all round about, there was nothing to be seen ; then with a thrill of horror he discovered that the shriek came from someone concealed in the barn.

'Ech ! the ghaist's there !' Sandy screamed, finding his voice from extremity of terror. In another moment he felt certain that some awful shape would glide out towards him through the closed door of the barn, for ghosts, he knew, cared nothing for bolts or bars. Flinging the hook down among the nettles, Sandy ran for his life, along the path through the wood. So exquisite was his terror, that he was quite unconscious of the ground under his feet—he might have been fleeing through space for all that he felt, and this in spite of the fact that the big loose boots which he wore hampered his flight at every step. One of his old, much knotted laces gave way and dangled round his ankles, but he never felt this either ; a bat flew straight into his face, he beat it away and rushed on and on—anything, anything to escape from the pursuing ghost.

Quite blind with fear, Sandy did not notice that Macdonald the keeper, Mrs. Macdonald's son, was advancing up the path towards him ; but at this moment the loose boot-lace tripped the boy up at last and down he came in a heap at the keeper's feet.

'Haud up, Sandy ! What's yer hurry, man ?' said Macdonald kindly enough.

'There's—there's—there's !' was all that Sandy could get out. He gathered himself together and stood up, but his breath came in short jerks, and words he had none.

'What's come ower ye, laddie ? Can ye no' speak ?' Macdonald said, putting his hand on the child's shoulder to quiet him.

'Ech—there's a ghaist in the hoose, an' it's comin' aifter me !' Sandy cried out at last.

'A ghaist ! There's no' a ghaist there ! What for d'ye think there is ?' the man asked.

'It gied an awfae skreich,' Sandy told him. He was becoming a little calmer, now that the reassuring presence of the keeper was beside him.

'Hoots, Sandy ! It's the buzzard yer hearin',' the man said. 'Hae ye never heard a buzzard skreich afore ? Come you back wi' me an' I'll let ye see him—he's a gey fine burd. I have him in the barn, keepin' him for a gentleman that's wantin' him for an aviary or some sic thing.'

It took a good deal of persuasion, however, before Sandy would consent to return to the old house, even under Macdonald's escort. He was still white and trembling, and as they drew near the barn again he fell behind the keeper for a moment, unable to conquer his fears.

'Hear him !' Macdonald laughed. 'He's cryin' on his rabbit ! Twa rabbits in the day the beggar gets. Come in, Sandy, an' I'll let ye see him.' He pushed open the barn door as he spoke, and Sandy, reassured, stepped into the place after him.

There, crouching beside the window, in the last rays of daylight, was a huge bird—the largest bird Sandy had ever seen. When the door opened, he turned towards it, uttering his terrible shriek. All Fierceness, all Cruelty and Appetite seemed to be expressed in that cry ; the bird was like some incarnation of the Spirit of Ferocity as he turned upon the intruders with flashing eyes and ravenous beak.

The air of the barn was heavy with the smell of putrid flesh, and a mass of half-devoured rabbit, bits of skin and tufts of fur lay upon the ground. Yet this creature of gross appetite did not

find complete satisfaction in his orgy of flesh. Had he not deserted his rabbit to gaze up at the sun through the bars?

As Macdonald and Sandy came in, the bird dashed across to where the half-devoured rabbit lay upon the ground, and spreading out its great wings and tail with a curious sweeping movement, enveloped the horrid mass from their sight.

'See him!' Macdonald said. 'He's thinkin' we're wantin' yon rotten stuff! Weel, there's anither for him, maybe that'll please him better.'

The keeper flung the little limp, furry body of a newly shot rabbit towards the buzzard as he spoke, and they stood back to watch him feed.

With a kingly movement the bird flung one great claw out over the rabbit, and stood thus as if he were having his portrait painted, or like a very stagey actor striking an attitude: 'This is mine now, I defy the world to take it from me,' he seemed to say; but he did not, to Sandy's grievous disappointment, begin to tear at the rabbit—he only asserted his right of possession over it.

'He's a fine burd yon,' Macdonald said. 'But he's an awfu' wurk wi' a' the meat he gets.'

Sandy, boy-like, was fascinated by the bird; he would have liked to stay and watch him for hours, even in that dark evil-smelling place.

'I'd like fine tae feed him for ye,' he said enviously. 'I'd gie him a drap watter tae—he hasna verra muckle in yon bowl.'

The keeper glanced at the empty dish.

'Weel, tak' it doon tae the burn an' fill it tae him if ye want the job. I'm thrang' the nicht; but mind ye steek the door weel when ye come awa'.'

'I was cuttin' the nettles'—Sandy began, a little ashamed of his hasty flight now; 'I maun finish the nettles.'

'Aye, ye maun dae that: syne ye can fill the bowl an' come awa', said the keeper.

'I'll no' be feart noo—the burd'll be company for me,' said Sandy. 'I'll ken what it is when he starts cryin'.'

The keeper laughed, and went off through the wood lighting his pipe, while Sandy, quite reassured by the near presence of the buzzard, fell to work again upon the nettles with a will.

It is wonderful how quickly most of us can get through with one task when we have another and pleasanter one awaiting us. The nettles fell before Sandy's hook at a great pace, and he forgot weariness and loneliness while he hurried over his work.

But the dark was indeed falling now, and even in the open space in front of the old house it was getting darker when Sandy ran down to the burn to wash out and refill the buzzard's dish.

Then carrying the brimming bowl carefully in both hands he came up again to the barn and pushed open the heavy door. All was very dark inside the barn now, and the boy stood still for a moment at the door and peered into the shadows before he went any farther. He could see nothing of the buzzard at first, then in a far corner he discerned its shape; but this was not the defiant bird of half an hour ago. Gathered together in a fine composed attitude of slumber, its fierce head hidden away under one wing, the buzzard might have been the most domestic of fowls. Sandy was disappointed: he had wished to give the bird the clean water, had hoped to see that lordly head dip down with one of its sublime attitudes, to see the wonderful beak open and drink a drop or two of the water. But evidently this pleasure was not to be his to-night; the great bird never moved.

Sandy put down the bowl upon the ground and turned to go. In the darkness his foot touched something—he had almost stumbled over it: the rabbit. Apparently the buzzard had not been hungry that night, for the rabbit was untouched. Sandy stood still—a thought crossed his mind: what about dinner to-morrow? Would it not be better for the buzzard to want a meal than the children at home, and Mother—aye, than himself?

'A rabbit's fine for dinner,' he said, standing there alone and hungry in the dark barn. For a moment he hesitated, from a thought of the breakfastless buzzard, not from the slightest idea of dishonesty towards Macdonald; then stooping down he humbly lifted from the filthy floor the buzzard's rejected meal, and buttoned it up inside his coat.

Before Sandy came home that night misery had reached its high-water mark in the Rankines' cottage. Mother still lay in bed, her eyes closed, paying no heed to anything that was going on, only now and then she would raise herself on her elbow for a moment to direct Maggie's careless steps, then sink back again exhausted by the effort. All day Maggie had been torn between having to work and wanting to play. She had put on the porridge to boil, rushed out just to have one swing, forgotten all about the porridge for an hour and returned to find it singed brown. The other children had cried because there was nothing but singed porridge for them

to eat . . . the house was filled with the smell of it. . . . But even this did not rouse Mother ; she had learned by hard experience to let the children cry if they wished to do so ; only when the new baby wailed more than usual she called to Maggie to bring the child to her. The last time that Maggie lifted the little bundle out of the cradle, she peered curiously into the tiny, wrinkled face as she gave the baby to her mother.

'He's lookin' gey queer, Mither,' she said. Mother sat up in bed and looked at the baby. The next minute, to Maggie's great surprise, she got out of bed, laid the baby back in the cradle and called to Maggie to help her to put on some clothes. She was so weak that she could scarcely stand, and Maggie, who had no idea what this sudden resolution meant, watched in great mystification while Mother, white and trembling, set to work with the baby—the baby that was so queer and cold. Maggie had to blow up the fire with all her might, using up half an ordinary day's supply of fuel. Once the fire was got to burn brightly, she had to make some bits of flannel as hot as they could be and give them to Mother, who sat now by the fire with baby on her knee. They took off his little nightgown and began to rub the tiny cold body gently with the hot cloths : the moment one got cold another had to be heated. But poor baby seemed to grow colder and colder in spite of all their rubbing.

Then Mother threw off the shawl that was round her and held baby tight, tight against herself, still rubbing away at it . . . and Maggie standing there grew silent, she didn't know why, and the room seemed very quiet. At last Maggie whispered 'He's no' cryin' noo, maybe he's sleepin'?' And at that, Mother cried out loud and rose up to her feet and carried baby into the back room and shut the door. . . . Maggie listened, wondering why Mother had taken him away from the fire, and it burning that warm and bright now! And just then Mother came back without baby, and fell down on to the bed, and Maggie thought she was dead. . .

At this terrible moment Sandy returned, and found himself with his hands full indeed, for Maggie had decided that the best thing she could do to help the situation was to begin to cry. Sandy, however, addressed himself to the task like a man. To begin with he lit the lamp. Then, seeing his mother's deadly white face, he decided to give her the only stimulant he had in the house, a cup of strong tea. As the kettle was boiling this took only a few minutes to prepare, and in that time Mother had opened her eyes again, so Sandy brought the tea to her and bade her swallow a few mouth-

fuls of it. He put his arm under her head, and with a little persuasion got her to drink the whole of the tea.

'Ye shouldna' hae got up, Mither. What for did ye no' bide in yer bed?' he asked, tenderly; and then, with a dismayed glance at the empty cradle, 'What's ever come o' the bairn?'

'I had tae rise, Sandy; the bairn's deid!' she told him in a choking whisper.

'Eh, Mither! an' him that wee!' Sandy cried, expressing the thought that rises in every mind at such an announcement. The poor little scrap of embryo manhood had never had his chance: it is true that he had escaped life's agonies; but he had also missed life's ecstasy—that fleeting breath seemed only to have been drawn in mockery. Some obscure sense of this mystery of unfulfilment had prompted Sandy's exclamation. . . .

He glanced at the clock, making a practised calculation based upon the early closing rule as to when his father might be expected home—two hours still.

'Father 'll no' be home yet a wee,' he said. 'Is there ony ither thing I can dae?'

'Get the bairns til their beds an' tak' yer porridge,' Mother said.

Sandy was relieved. Apparently the affairs of life had to go on as usual, even if the baby was lying dead in the back room. He called Maggie, and somehow they tumbled the six younger children into their sleeping places for the night. Then returning to the kitchen, Sandy called upon his sister to produce his supper. The awful mess of cold porridge which she brought out of the dresser cupboard would have been refused by any self-respecting dog; but Sandy had reached that stage of hunger and fatigue when anything in the shape of food is welcome. He sat down by the fire, kicked off his big boots at last, removed his ragged stockings and spread out his toes towards the blazing logs while he supped up the burnt porridge without a grumble.

Maggie went off to bed beside the other children, and the kitchen became so quiet that a mouse stole out in search of crumbs and advanced close to where Sandy sat: he watched it with interest. . . . There was not a sound to be heard except the tick-tick of the clock and the crackle of the wood fire. In her bed at the other side of the room Mother never stirred. . . . Sandy was afraid to move in case he should waken her if she had fallen asleep; gradually his head nodded and nodded. . . . he was sound asleep himself.

He woke with a start to hear Mother's voice, high-pitched, urgent, calling out to him :—

'Sandy! Sandy! There's yer faither comin'. Gang oot an' help him in. Ech! tell him aboot the bairn! He'll surely no' mak' sic a noise an' deith in the hoose.'

Distant still, but coming every minute nearer, Sandy heard the well-known sound of his father's voice as he came home across the fields roaring out his shameless drunken songs.

Sandy ran to the door. High in the clear sky the harvest moon hung bright and broad, flooding the bare stubble fields with light till they looked almost as if they were covered with snow. And there his father came stumbling along the path, shouting up to the great tranquil moon, as if it were a man, mocking it, halloaing to it, threatening it with his clenched fists, cursing and anon laughing aloud. . . . Sandy ran down the field on his bare feet to meet him, as silent as his own shadow, caught hold of his arm to steady him, and bade him stand still.

'Whisht, Father, ye maun be quiet—the bairn's deid!' he cried.

A sufficiently violent start will often have a sobering effect, and it happened to act thus now. Rankine could not steady his steps, but he pulled himself together enough to understand that something had happened in his absence—something solemn and terrible. Holding on to Sandy's shoulder he lurched up to the cottage, and sitting down on the big stone beside the 'spout,' pointed helplessly towards the water. Sandy knew what he wanted; it was not the first time, unfortunately, that the child had been asked to perform this task. Lifting the old tin dipper that always lay beside the spout, Sandy filled it with the ice-cold water and threw this over his father's face and neck. Then he went indoors and brought back an old towel with which he rubbed down the thick shock of black hair which adorned his father's head.

Thus fortified, Rankine got up at last and went into the house, to deal as best he might with the situation he found there.

After this there was a day of solemnity in the cottage, dedicated as it were to the memory of the baby. Neither Sandy nor his father went to work, tho' Sandy would have liked to do so instead of staying at home, where everything was so unnaturally quiet, and one couldn't forget that strange little dead baby that lay in the back room: he was well accustomed to live babies; but he had never seen a dead one before and the sight scared him. In

the evening the carpenter came with a tiny coffin, into which they laid the little cold body, and Sandy stood solemnly there to watch.

'Eh, Mither, it's just like a wee cradle,' he said; and Mother nodded, but could not speak. . . .

The next morning they carried the little coffin to the churchyard of Kildhrun, where a span-long grave had been dug . . . and that was the end of it all.

On the way home from the churchyard, Father was silent, and looked very solemn; but when they reached the cottage he cast aside his grave looks, put on his working clothes again and started for the harvest field. The children had begun to make their usual noise again, and Mother was moving about in the kitchen once more, though she looked very tired and sat down every few minutes to rest. Now was the time, Sandy thought, for a joyful surprise.

'Wad ye fancy a drop rabbit broth, Mither?' he asked.

'Aye, verra weel, Sandy; but there's no' a rabbit in the hoose.'

'Aye is there: a grand rabbit,' Sandy told her triumphantly. 'I have it in the byre.'

To all his mother's questions as to where the rabbit came from, Sandy would only reply '*That's tellin'*,' an enigmatic answer which she finally accepted as good enough, and gladly took the goods the gods had provided. Under her direction, Sandy skinned, cleaned, and cut up his rabbit into joints; got out the big pot and hung it over the fire; prepared some vegetables, and mixed them and the meat together into what promised to be a luscious stew. Eh! he thought, wouldn't it be fine if he could get food like this for Mother every day . . . to think of yon bird eating two rabbits a day, and Mother wanting her food!

Then Sandy revolved several plans in his young mind. Just for a moment he wondered if he could deprive the buzzard every evening of his second rabbit; but this scheme was hastily dismissed as quite unfair—the bird hadn't wanted it the other night, that was the only reason why he had felt it allowable to take it. He couldn't do such a thing again.

But if Macdonald would give him charge of the buzzard, could he strike a bargain with the keeper for two rabbits a week as pay?

Sandy's imagination kindled at this idea, for as well as getting the rabbits he would have the delight of taking care of the buzzard. Poverty often teaches great astuteness in worldly affairs, and

Sandy was quick to see that it would be cheaper for Macdonald to pay him in rabbits than in coin, while he, in his turn, would get more nourishment for the family out of two rabbits than he could buy with such money as he was likely to get for feeding the buzzard.

All the afternoon as he worked about in the cottage helping his mother, Sandy turned this scheme over and over in his mind; he determined to broach the subject with Macdonald that evening when he went to finish his now long-delayed job at Kildhrun. The Macdonalds had of course heard about the baby's death, and when Sandy presented himself at their door he received Mrs. Macdonald's kindly comments on that sad event. Neither she nor Sandy could really consider it a bereavement; but they both preserved the decent fiction that it was one. Sandy had a feeling in the back of his head that the poor baby would know if it was spoken about as an unimportant, unregretted member of the family; it was kinder to reckon it as a little personality, one of themselves, however short its stay had been among them. So he shook his head and assured Mrs. Macdonald that they 'were missin' him awfae,' and she, conniving at this right-feeling fraud, replied in a tone of deep conviction, 'Ye will that, laddie'; then, after a moment's suitable pause, 'Aweel, ye're tae finish the nettles up at the auld hoose; here's the henk fer ye.'

Having got his orders, Sandy was about to start for Kildhrun when Macdonald appeared at the gate, his gun over his shoulder, a newly shot rabbit in his hand.

'Here ye are, Sandy!' he cried. 'Here's a job for ye. Ye'll can feed the buzzard the nicht, but see that the door's weel steekit on him.'

Sandy divined his opportunity; but he was not quite sure how best to present his request—two rabbits seemed so much for him to ask, although the keeper apparently regarded them as rather of the nature of vermin, to judge by the contemptuous way in which he flung the dead rabbit towards him.

'I was wonderin' ——' the boy began, and then could not go on.

'Weel? what were ye wonderin'?' Macdonald asked, surprised by the deep flush that passed across Sandy's white face.

'If ye'd gie me the burd tae mind for ye,' Sandy said at last. 'I'd be awfae good til him.'

The keeper spat upon the ground and reflected before he spoke.

'Ye see, he maun be real weel looked aifter, Sandy, or I'll no' get my money for him,' he explained. 'He maun be fed reg'lar, nicht and mornin'; a burd 'll no' dae wantin' his meat reg'lar.'

The thought passed through Sandy's mind that he himself could do with having his meat more regular—it seemed hard that a bird should be so plentifully fed when he sometimes went short ; but he did not make this bitter remark aloud, till the keeper's next question evoked something a little like it.

'What for were ye wantin' the job, Sandy ? Ye're got wurk up at Robertson's the noo, havena ye ?' he asked.

'I was wantin' tae get meat for them at hame,' Sandy blurted out, forgetting pride in his intense desire to help the home budget. 'There's an awfae lot of us at hame, an' food's that dear I canna buy verra muckle wi' my wages. I thoct maybe ye'd let me feed the burd for ye an' pay me wi' twa rabbits the week ; they'd come in gey handy for the bairns.'

'An' if I gied ye twa rabbits in the week ye wadna tak' ony mair ?' Macdonald asked, half in joke, little thinking what the effect of his words would be. For Sandy's face grew crimson again, and tears sprang into his eyes ; he stammered and could not get out his words, till at last they came in a long, incoherent string :—

'The buzzard hadna eaten it . . . he'd left it on the groond . . . I didna think it was stealin' . . . a burd's no' a man.' . . .

Macdonald gazed at the child in astonishment, scarcely taking in at first what his words meant. Then, as their meaning dawned upon him, he whistled and scratched his head in perplexity.

'Sae ye took the rabbit yon night ye were up bye ?' he asked at length.

Sandy nearly choked with shame as he confessed his crime.

'I thoct it wad be fine for dinner, we've no' had verra muckle this long time,' he said sadly.

The keeper swore under his breath, and Sandy, who was accustomed to such words, caught their well-known sounds and trembled—he thought that Macdonald was very angry and would punish him accordingly. But it was Sandy's father, not Sandy, who was being sent to Hell by the keeper—to a special Hell, reserved for parents who let their children starve. When he spoke again his voice was kind enough.

'Hoots, laddie, ye didna think ony hairm ; but mind ye dinna tak' anither. Gang up wi' this ane for him the nicht, an' gie him a drop clean water. I'll think ower it.'

He stood by the gate and watched Sandy go off into the woods carrying the rabbit, and as he watched he revolved the problem in his mind. Was the boy to be trusted ? Rabbits meant a great deal to a family that was short of food, it might be wiser perhaps

to find him some other job. . . . And then, being quite untouched by sentiment, the keeper turned back into the house, laughing at the idea of anyone eating the buzzard's rabbit with satisfaction.

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A long beam of sunlight was still piercing through the beech trees as Sandy arrived at the old house ; it struck upon the window of the barn, and lit up all the confusion that lay on the ground from the buzzard's last meal. Moping by the window, gazing up towards the light, sat the great bird. Sandy had opened the door cautiously, and he advanced well into the middle of the barn before he flung down the rabbit upon the floor ; he wished to be near at hand while the meal was enjoyed.

Perhaps the bird recognised that Sandy was but a feeble master ; perhaps birds are subject to evil tempers just as men are ; however that may be, he dashed straight across the barn at the boy, his great wings beating the air, his fierce claws striking out like the fists of a prize-fighter.

Before this onslaught Sandy backed instinctively, his hands held up in front of his face to protect his eyes from the terrifying claws. As he backed, Sandy came up against a box that stood in the corner, and the next moment he had fallen and rolled his length among the bones and tufts of rabbit-skin upon the floor. The wind of the buzzard's wings beat the air above him in the dusk of the barn, he wondered if its claws would be buried in his flesh before he escaped from them ; but no—all was still. In the stillness Sandy dared to uncover his face again and sit up. He looked round for his enemy, expecting a fresh onslaught and not realising what had happened. Then the whole tragedy of the situation rushed in upon him and overwhelmed him : there, well outside of the barn, far beyond his power to recapture it, sat the buzzard. For a moment Sandy had a hope that he might reach the bird and throw his jacket over it, as it sat there blinking in the unaccustomed sunlight. For the creature, so lately a captive in darkness, seemed too bewildered to take advantage of its liberty, it crouched on a big stone near the door and did not attempt to move. But as Sandy stood wondering what to do, the bird spread out its great wings and rose gently into the air with a serene, effortless movement.

Sandy, standing in the barn among all the sordid litter the bird had left behind, watched that tremendous flight, spell-bound with admiration : all that is meant by the words Captivity and Freedom became clear to the boy at that moment. As long as his eyes could

follow the speck in the sky he gazed up after it, then came back to earth as it were, and to the disaster that had overwhelmed him. Here indeed was a swift end to all his schemes for the better feeding of his family! Not only was there now no buzzard to be looked after, but Macdonald would never trust him again with any job since he had acquitted himself so badly about this one. How, Sandy asked, was he ever to face the keeper and tell him that the buzzard had escaped?

As a preliminary to this ordeal, Sandy flung himself down upon the ground and indulged in what children call 'a cry.' Which of us does not remember the sensation of 'a cry'?—the first exquisite relief of tears, the quick exhaustion that followed upon the indulgence? The storm of grief and despair that swept over poor little Sandy was not, however, quick in its passing. He lay there and sobbed for nearly half an hour before the second phase, that of total exhaustion, had been reached. Then, sitting up, he wiped his reddened eyes with the sleeve of his coat, drawing long smears of earth down his face in the process. The 'cry,' it is true, was over; but every few minutes a sob would come struggling up from his throat again, a last breath of the storm. These also must be mastered before he could face Macdonald. When that intolerable ache in the throat had subsided, the boy knew that he could trust himself. He rose from the ground, shook the dust from his clothes, shut the door of the barn, and trudged off down the path to meet his punishment, whatever that might be.

Macdonald would not have been human if he had not been angry. As a matter of fact, he was very angry indeed, and bade Sandy be off out of his sight in no gentle terms. He was a quick-tempered man though not unkind; and he allowed his temper to get the upper hand that night. Sandy stood before him, tear-stained, silent, unresisting, an image of childish grief and helplessness.

'I'm real sorry,' was all the defence he could make—all at least that he attempted. Mrs. Macdonald coming in, pail in hand, from the byre, stopped to hear what was going on between her son and the boy.

'Eh, John! dinna be flytin' the laddie like yon!' she cried, moved to compassion by Sandy's tear-besmirched face, and not knowing what his fault had been.

'Ye'd flyte him yersel' if he'd lost ye two punds in siller, an'

three months' work feedin' yon bird,' said the keeper grimly; then turning to Sandy, as his wrath cooled a little, he added 'Well, it's done noo, onyway; get awa hame wi' ye. I was a gowk tae trust ye wi' him.'

Sandy moved away slowly, dragging his feet in the big boots as if they were heavy as lead, or even as heavy as his heart.

'Puir bit laddie!' Mrs. Macdonald said. 'He's no' gettin' his meat, John; that's the way he aye looks wearit like.'

'Maybe,' John assented, a little ashamed now of his anger, and they turned in to the house together, shaking their heads over the Rankine family. Sandy, in the meantime, ploughed his way across the fields in the direction of home, thinking the world a very dark place indeed. If he could even have justified himself to the keeper in any way, could have explained how it had all happened, things wouldn't have been so bad; but he hadn't been listened to for a moment . . . men were unjust . . . his heart seemed to boil up in sudden rage over the injustice of everything, and his own helplessness under it all. . . . Big, grown men like Macdonald and Father had power in their hands, and could do what they liked with boys like him. . . .

As Sandy came wearily up to the cottage door, he heard Maggie's voice hailing him in vast excitement. Something had happened apparently, whatever it was. He quickened his slow steps as she came running down the field to meet him.

'Eh, Sandy! faither's hame wi' bread an' tea an' cheese for us a', an' the rabbit's cookin' fine!' she explained; but this, which in an ordinary family would have seemed no news at all, required further explanation: it was not Father's habit to return from the village laden with food.

'I dinna ken what their sayin',' she said, 'Mither shut the door, but I pit ma ear til't, an' I think Faither's tae gang awa'.'

'Gang awa'?—whaur tae? Sandy asked, incredulous of such good luck.

'I couldna mak' oot; maybe he'll tell you, Sandy,' she answered.

Under the stimulus of curiosity, Sandy actually forgot all about the buzzard and his own fatigue. The goodly smell of cooking rabbit, too, acted favourably upon him as he came up to the door; he felt an uprising of Hope once again.

Sure enough the fire was burning brightly in the cottage and the table seemed to be covered with a profusion of food, while Mother, a good deal whiter than the so-called table-cloth which graced the

meal, was moving about the kitchen with a certain air of hopefulness. Father sat by the fire cutting up twist tobacco on the palm of his hand. What was the meaning of all this ?

Sandy flung himself down on a chair, his legs stuck out before him in a most ungraceful attitude, and made a sarcastic remark to his parent :

'Yer hame early the nicht,' he said.

'Aye,' said Father, cutting away at his tobacco ; but he did not clear up the mystery.

'They'll hae finished the east field up at Robertson's ?' Sandy said next.

'Weel, I've finished wi' it, onyway,' said Father. 'I'll no' be back there again.' This cryptic reply filled Sandy with alarm. Could it be that Father had been sacked from Robertson's ? Surely that was scarcely possible just now, when labour was so scarce ; yet what else could this speech mean ? A minute later the mystery was solved.

'I'm seek o' athing here,' Father announced. 'An' they say there's bonnie fightin' in France the noo, sae I'm awa' til the War.'

'An' wha's tae keep us a' ?' Sandy cried, his voice shrill with anxiety. 'I'll no' can wurk for Mither an' a' the bairns.'

Rankine was not, as you may have gathered by this time, a tender parent, and he showed his unkindness now, by trying to get Sandy to believe that the whole support of the household was to fall on him.

'Maybe ye'll hae tae try, Sandy,' he said very gravely. 'Ye gettin' tae be a big lad noo, it's no' verra muckle for ye tae keep yer Mither an' the bairns.'

For a moment Sandy sat there dumb with horror at the prospect of shouldering such a burden ; then Mother interposed : 'Hoots, Sandy, dinna heed him,' she said. 'He's jist havin' ye on a wee thing.'

Sandy breathed again ; and listened, I am afraid not very intelligently, to an explanation of Separation Allowances.

'Ye'll be better off than ever ye've been afore,' Father assured him ; but Sandy was not as dazzled as he might well have been if he had taken in the change that was about to come to the fortunes of his family. He only grunted in reply to all these explanations, and began to take off his boots that he might feel more comfortable before beginning to eat this wonderful supper which smelt so good.

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Among all the tragedies of the War, there are none more subtly mournful than those where a man's absence is counted the greatest of blessings.

If you have seen flowers that have been beaten down by a storm begin to raise their little battered faces out of the mould, all earth-stained, bruised, and crushed, you have seen what began to happen in the Rankine cottage after the father of the family went away to the War. At first the transformation from want to what seemed affluence was rather too sudden to be quite realised by any of the family. The yoke of poverty had rested so heavily upon them that its weight still seemed to crush them down, even after it had been lifted off. Then Sandy began to understand that it wasn't only once in a while that he had a decent sum to spend for Mother at the village shop, but every Saturday evening. Mother too, after a few months of better food, became young and strong looking again, and was able to clean the house, having now soap to clean it with and a grand new scrubbing brush. If Sandy had ever looked in the glass, he would soon not have recognised his own reflection there, for his cheeks had filled out and were brown and red with health. He did not stoop any longer, and had said goodbye to his old tired, lagging step : he wore a new pair of boots too, which fitted him. Maggie and the little ones were like so many butter balls on the generous new scale of rations ; and this through all the bitter months of winter—months that had been a nightmare in the old ill-fed days. A most true proverb tells us that it never rains but it pours, and this must be the reason why Macdonald the keeper so often brought a pair of rabbits to the little family at the croft that winter. It is true, the rabbits were not half as necessary this year as the year before ; but an eye that hath kept watch o'er man's mortality will see that this was the very reason why they arrived with such regularity.

War, then, did not show a frowning face to the Rankines—they could almost have prayed that Europe might never emerge again from the throes of conflict. The younger children happily did not anticipate evils to come, and lived in the present, content with the good things it brought them. But Sandy, older by reason of many harsh experiences, often had fearful visitings of soul when he looked into the future : the War would not last for ever : Father would soon be home again, and they would be all back in the old miserable state of things once more. He wisely kept these terrors to himself, and if Mother shared them, she too suffered in silence.

The winter passed into spring, and Father went out to France ; Sandy began to feel more interest in the War now that they were, so to speak, taking an active part in it : he bought a newspaper whenever he could, and read many sanguinary details aloud to the family in the evening. Now and then a letter would arrive from France—not very illuminating in any way, but always with the same report of the writer—he was 'getting on fine' and would soon be home on leave. Neither Mother nor Sandy ever commented upon this last item.

One evening a knock came to the door, and the red-haired boy from the Post Office shouted out '*Telegram*' to them, in the most alarming voice. Sandy ran to bring in this unusual message.

'Faither 'll be comin' hame,' he cried, and in spite of the pleasant importance of actually receiving a telegram from a real combatant, his heart misgave him at the thought of all that this home-coming might imply.

Mother opened the envelope, and stood there, saying not a word.

'Is he comin' the morn?' Sandy asked ; but still she did not answer. Then she handed the message to him, mutely, and turned away. Sandy read, and yet failed to believe the words on the paper : Father had been killed.

'Eh, Mither ! D'ye think it's true?' he cried.

'Aye ; what for would it no' be true?' she answered in a queer choked voice. She was not crying as Sandy had thought people always did when they heard about a death ; but she bade him go out and leave her alone.

Sandy closed the cottage door behind him, and stood there for a minute, not knowing what to do. In the distance he heard the sound of the children's voices at play beside the burn. Should he go and tell them what had happened, he wondered ? But a strange confusion of thoughts pressed in upon his young mind, and, like Mother, he wished to be alone.

He crossed the field and wandered up into the glen. There, throwing himself down among the heather, Sandy gazed up into the deep blue of the summer sky and repeated over and over this bewildering bit of news that had come to him : '*He'll no' be back ! He'll no' be back !*' Here was an end to all their troubles, come quite suddenly. When Sandy took time to think, he saw that it was not in the least surprising ; but extraordinarily probable. Weren't thousands and thousands of men being killed every day ?

Still, the surprise remained, that Father should have been one of these ! If Sandy had been a cynic, which happily he was not, he would have marvelled even more than he did over his father's death ; for alas, the charmed lives of black sheep are in marked contrast with the short lives of the flowers of the flock ! But this idea never crossed his mind for a second. What did torment him was an unmistakable, tragic sense of relief, as if a heavy weight had rolled off his back. Long Sandy lay there among the heather, wrestling with this shameful thought. That he should weigh peace and comfort and enough to eat for them all, against the fact of his own father's death, filled him with shame, yet he could not help the feeling, let him try as he might. One thing he could help, however, and Sandy being a Scotchman had very quickly decided this point for himself : no one would ever know from him that he had felt any relief at hearing of his father's death. He had just come to this conclusion when he noticed a speck far up in the sky, which grew larger and larger as it came towards him. Sandy sat up on his elbow and gazed at the great bird sailing lazily across the sky. Was it his own buzzard, he wondered, up there enjoying its freedom ? 'Eh ! I'm real glad he got awa', he thought, remembering the dark barn and the rabbit skins, and then all the wonder of the escape . . . a grand thing freedom . . . to get out and away from things that kept one captive.

When the children had all been put to bed that night Sandy held long converse with his mother on many subjects ; but it will not surprise readers who have at all grasped the character of our young friend, to hear that one of the first and most serious matters under discussion between the mother and son was the printing of a suitable memorial card for Father.

'An', *Mither*, a' the bairns maun hae blacks,' Sandy concluded. 'It'll be an awfae expense ; but I'd be fair affronted tae tak' them tae the kirk wi'oot them, an' Faither "died in battle," as they're sayin' in the papers.'

Mrs. Rankine assented thoroughly to this proposal, and the whole family reverted for a month to compulsory rations to produce those handsome weeds in which they mourned the husband and father departed. I, for one, do not blame them ; for, after all, nothing in all poor Rankine's wasted life had so well become him as his manner of leaving it.

A POSTSCRIPT TO 'A SUCCESS AND A FAILURE.'

IN the October issue of this Magazine appeared an article of mine entitled 'A Success and a Failure: The *Goeben-Breslau* Tragedy.' Many correspondents have written to me about this article, which, for the first time, gave a connected account of the operations in the Mediterranean during the first few days of the war which ended in the escape of the *Goeben* and *Breslau* to the Dardanelles. The failure of the Government at home to send our battle cruisers to Constantinople in pursuit of the German vessels, and the tragical consequences which followed, were also discussed.

Many of my correspondents thank me very heartily for throwing some light upon a very puzzling and humiliating incident in the war, and express regret that I was obliged, for national reasons, to say nothing upon certain features which one day will be fully revealed. I ask permission to correct one mistake. The *Invincible* was not present; it was her sister ship the *Indomitable* which was there with the *Indefatigable* and the *Inflexible* (flag). The *Invincible* was commissioned on August 2, 1914, and was in dock at Portsmouth when the *Goeben-Breslau* operations were in progress. The German Admiral mistook the *Indomitable* for her sister the *Invincible*—hence my error.

An officer who was present in one of the three battle cruisers takes me severely to task for my presumption in writing upon the subject at all. I accept the reproof with humility, and rather wonder myself how I dared to do it, seeing that no despatches have been published, and the proceedings at the Admiralty inquiry are strictly under Censorship. This officer requests me to point out that the armoured cruiser *Duke of Edinburgh* was with her sister the *Black Prince* in the squadron which included the *Defence* and *Warrior*. There were also three light cruisers in the Mediterranean, in addition to the *Gloucester*, and several destroyers. I confined my attention to the vessels immediately concerned. My correspondent discusses the relative fighting powers of the *Indefatigable* and the two *Inflexibles* as compared with those of the *Goeben*, and claims that the orders given to the Commander-in-Chief and certain 'secret incidents' would, if made known, put a different complexion on the affair. He writes: 'It is obvious that Mr. Bennet Copplestone has not the remotest idea of what

orders were given to Sir Berkeley Milne or what his main object was.' In my foolish presumption I assumed that his 'main object' was to seek out the *Goeben* and *Breslau* and to sink them at sight as soon as war was declared. That is usually considered to be the first duty of the Royal Navy, a duty which it has always been eager to discharge at all risks.

One fact has come to me which throws an interesting light on the collusion between the Germans and King Constantine, late of Greece. Although a French official communication stated that the *Goeben* and *Breslau* coaled at Syra on the way to the Dardanelles, I have unimpeachable authority for contradicting it. The German vessels coaled at the small island of Denusa, in the Cyclades, whence coal was taken in colliers by the orders of King Constantine. The German Admiral communicated with Athens by wireless on August 3, and the secret coaling arrangements were made at his request. This fact shows to what an extent King Constantine was already committed to the German cause.

BENNET COPPLESTONE.

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